

PC ZONE

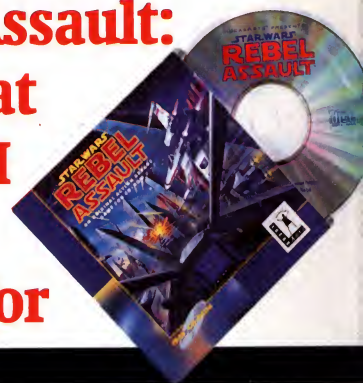
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02 >



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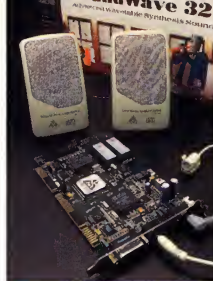
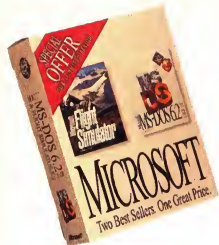


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REVIEWS

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100% GAMES

PC ZONE

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Tel: 071 631 1433
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Editor Paul Lakin; **Art Editor** Duncan C. Hemphill; **Deputy Editor** Laurence Scottford; **Technical Editor** Mark Burgess; **Production Editor** Kirsty Fortune; **Contributors** Chris Anderson, Simon Bradley, Duncan MacDonald, David McCandless, Patrick McCarthy, Vici MacDonald (Design), Paul Presley, Sam Syed (Design), Andrew Wright; **Publisher** Tim Saddleton Ponting; **Subscriptions Hotline** 0272 537711; **Senior Sales Executive** Saul Leese 071 631 1433; **Advertising Sales Executive** Mike Shepherd; **Group Advertising Manager** Christine Reid; **Advertising Production Manager** Jenni Wood; **Group Production Manager** Simon Maggs; **Assistant Group Production Manager** Mike Robinson **Origination** Ebony 0579 340100; **Printed in England** by ET Heron; **Newstrade Manager** James Burnay; **Distribution** COMAG Magazine Marketing 0895 444055; **Mail Order Manager** Julia French; **Publishing Director** Bruce Sawford; **Circulation Director** Sean Farmer; **Creative Director** Jimmy Egerton; **Non-Executive Director** Dick Pountain; **Financial Director** Ian Leggatt; **Managing Director** Alistair Ramsay; **Chairman** Felix Dennis

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One of the hottest design teams turns its attention to the hottest game format. We see the first results. **PAGE 20**



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A trip down memory lane for all those who remember that 8-bit classic *Lords Of Midnight* as the third installment debuts on PC and looks set to win a whole new generation of fans.

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ONCE MORE THE most streetwise, stylish and self-opinionated team ever to use Xtree Gold set their sights on everything hackable (including *X-Wing*, *Privateer*, *Star Trek* and *Wing Commander*). In their own conniving little way, they come up with infinite lives, unlimited money and a whole host of other distinctly unsporting bonuses.

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PC ZONE

February 1994 Issue Eleven

BONUS!



STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES

KEYBOARD OVERLAY



PREMIER CHALLENGE

Fully playable football management game plus some HackMasters™ goodies. **PAGE 14**

HD DISK

Bulletin

+ The New Year is upon us. What's going to be big in 1994? Read on and find out...

Pinkie

Pretty In Pink

+ From Millenium, the team behind gilled superstar James Pond, comes an even more unlikely hero with the less than machismo name of Pinkie. There's little news about this latest star as yet, except that he lives on the planet Purple and has to protect the last of the dinosaur eggs. All very cosmic.

Nomad

In *Nomad*, the latest game from Gametek, you play an agent working for Special Intelligence. An alien craft has crashed in the Solar System. It has been repaired and your mission is to use it to contact the various alien races that have shown an interest in Earth. A number of robot ships have been harassing the place and it is for you to find out who the good guys are and forge an alliance with them. There are many different aliens, each with their own customs, language, personalities and physical appearance.

The game has a strong strategy element with some combat. It also features digitised speech and artificial intelligence – the feelings of the aliens change through the game depending on how you treat them.

Out: Now Price: £29.99
Further details: Phone Gametek on 0753 553445



God Soft

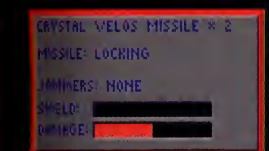
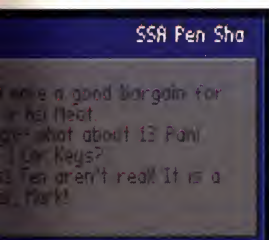
CONCERNED by the perceived increase in sex and violence in software products, ALIVE Software is releasing a range of products based on tales from the Bible (which is not devoid of sex and violence itself). The games (nine of which are currently available) range from quiz-based puzzlers to out-and-out arcade adventures and ALIVE insists that though their aim is to promote a Christian message, they should be fun too.

If you are interested in this product, ALIVE Software can be contacted on 0454 415 697.



All American Toys

For those of you who are hopelessly addicted to the bizarre American sports that crop up on later night ITV or Channel 4, Gametek's latest collection may be of some interest since it includes both the high speed of *Bill Elliot's Nascar Challenge* and the high camp of *American Gladiators*. For those who prefer their entertainment to be somewhat more conventional there's arcade flight action in *Danger Zone* and a lot of hut hut hut in *NFL*. The compilation glories in the name *American Allstars Collection*, is available now and will cost you £39.99.



Get your hands dirty in heli-battles.

Campaign II

Test your tactical skills in a post Second World War conflict at the head of either NATO or Soviet forces. The game allows you to play either as overall commander worrying about strategy and letting the battles look after themselves, or to roll your sleeves up and get directly involved with individual battles.

As well as a number of preset campaign maps the game also includes a map editor which enables you to create new campaign maps and alter existing ones. The game will be available from Empire.



El Tel For England

Those of you looking to hone your footballing strategies before dropping off a CV to the FA are not going to be short of management games to practise on. New releases include *Premier Manager 2* from Gremlin, *Championship Manager 94* from Domark, *Championship Manager Italia* (from the team behind *Championship Manager*) and *Premier Challenge*. If you're feeling spoilt for choice, rush out to get our next issue for an in-depth round-up of footie management games.

DISPATCHES

+++ THE DIG FROM LUCAS-

Arts has now been postponed until the last quarter of 1994. The product is being completely redesigned by the development team in conjunction with Steven Spielberg. Watch this space for more news later in the year.

+++ CAPSTONE HAS NOW

completed its game based on the popular US sitcom *The Beverly Hillbillies*. Taking the part of head hillbilly, Jed, you must throw a huge hoe-down for your neighbours and rescue Granny who has been kidnapped. For further details contact Capstone in the US on 010 1 800 468 7226.

+++ ELECTRONIC ARTS HAS

released a patch for *Kasparov's Gambit* (review issue nine). This updates the program to version 1.1 and restores the SOCRATES engine to full 32-bit operation. It also improves the driver setup, low memory detection and fixes bugs in the time controller and the rating feature. And much, much more, as they say. The self-extracting archive is over 1Mb.

+++ MICROSOFT HAS ALSO

released an update of their acclaimed CD, *Cinemanía*. *Cinemanía '94* contains the 1994 edition of Leonard Maltin's *Movie and Video Guide*, Baseline's *Motion Picture Guide* and other works of reference. Interested cinema buffs should contact Microsoft on 0734 270 001.

+++ MICROSOFT IS FOLLOWING

the success of *Flight Simulator 5.0* with *Microsoft Space Simulator*. This lets you experience space flight and explore the heavens. NASA has helped make it realistic and the program incorporates data from the Voyager, Magellan, Viking and Mariner missions. It's certainly wowed Don Williams, who's flown a couple of real Shuttle missions. 'This product has the ability to re-awaken an interest in space exploration,' he says. The program has more modest technical requirements than the real thing; a mere 386 with VGA/SVGA should do nicely.

In the beginning
there was darkness ...

From the Makers of the Award-Winning
Alone In The Dark * comes

ALONE IN THE DARK II

"Promises to be bigger and faster
and in every quantifiable way,
better than the original"

PC GAMER

"superb animation" "seriously impressive"

EDGE

PC REVIEW

"Fans of *Alone In The Dark* will not be disappointed"

PC ZONE

"will probably be one of the
most popular games of 1994"

PC HOME

SEE THE
LIGHT ...
ON JANUARY
20TH 1994

"at Infogrames we
all have to believe in miracles"

BRUNO BONNELL, CHAIRMAN, INFOGRAMES



14 SMEDLEY STREET, CLAPHAM, LONDON SW4 6PF TELEPHONE: 071-738 8199

* *Alone In The Dark I* now available on PC and CD Rom complete with
"Jack In The Dark" (featuring characters from *Alone In The Dark I*)

Bulletin

Megarace

Cryo, the creators of *Dune*, are currently putting the finishing touches to a futuristic race game. *Megarace* has become an international institution – a high-speed, televised race that takes place in and around cityscapes, oceans and even outer space. To maintain viewing figures the races must be kept exciting, so extra obstacles and cars (of which there are eight types) may be added at certain stages. Additionally the 15 tracks have many built-in twists, turns and loops. One even revolves on giant hydraulic arms. What we've seen of *Megarace* so far looks absolutely fantastic. If the gameplay is of a similarly high standard, this could be a top title for 1994. *Megarace* will be available on CD only at the beginning of February. For further details call Mindscape on 0444 246333.



Unnecessary Roughness

Although the title might sound as if it's based on a certain English striker's approach to heading the ball, this is an American football sim from Accolade. The game includes the full NFLPA roster, stats and extensive play book. Action can be viewed from anywhere on the field or stadium and is made up of real footballers filmed in action, digitally captured onto computer and then (if you will pardon the expression) touched up by artists. It should be available around the end of this month and will cost £39.99.

Clive Sinclair and son Crispin Sinclair – now in the mail order games business.

Whatever happened to...

+ Clive Sinclair – remember him? Inventor of countless computers with 'ZX' in the title, the best joke in the world (the C5), and general, all-round, entrepreneurial good egg. Where is he now? What is he up to? Putting his name and face to a mail order games company that's what. Sinclair Direct, which is run by Clive Sinclair's son, Crispin Sinclair, stocks a wide range of PC games, CD-ROM titles and accessories, most of which can be dispatched within 48 hours. Rather unusually, for a mail order operation, if having ordered a game, you decide it's not for you, you can send it back intact for a replacement or refund. For further details call 071-263 3529.



Flight Of The Amazon Queen

Definitely one of the ones to watch for the new year Renegade's tongue-in-cheek adventure *Flight Of The Amazon Queen* is nearing completion and looking better by the minute. Aiming to capture the atmosphere of the late '40s B-Movie the game stars Joe, a freelance pilot who has been stranded in the jungle with Hollywood starlet Faye Russell. Between them and freedom lies a world of bizarre voodoo sects and leiderhosen-clad tribesmen, a world where nothing is as it seems and anthropological accuracy is not allowed to get in the way of a good joke.



Show Time

THE DECEMBER 1993 Computer Shopper Show proved to be a tremendous success. One of the highlights, they mentioned immodestly, was the PC Zone stand where people could play the latest games, meet the PC Zone team and win prizes in our games challenges. No one was able to beat Macca at *Star Control 2* but Ross Chalfont won himself a fab Orchid Gamewave worth £150 in our *IndyCar* Challenge.

If you missed out this time, then be sure to catch us at the March Computer Shopper Show in Birmingham. Even more games, challenges and special events plus a chance for non-London readers to take part in a Readers' Panel – your chance to sound off about the latest games. See you there.



ADDENDUM In issue nine of *PC Zone* we quoted the price of the puzzle game *Clix* as £14.99. In fact *Clix* costs £7.99 including VAT. For more details contact Words & Pictures, First Floor, 8 West Bar, Banbury, Oxon, OX16 9RP tel: 0295 258335.



The Elder Scrolls ARENA



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Here is a colossal fantasy world, encompassing generations of characters and over 400 cities and towns, where the realism is so powerful you may never escape Her depths...



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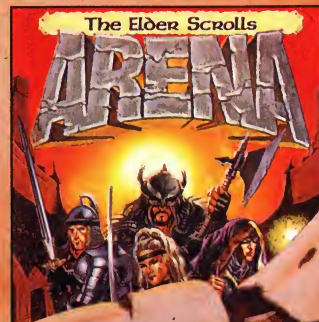
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You've seen beat 'em-ups before – from *International Karate+* to *Street Fighter 2*, but nothing like this. Megatech has come up with a startling mix of Bruce Lee action and Anime antics. **Laurence Scotford** gets bruised and bemused as he discovers what it's all about.

RIGHT NOW ANIME is the hottest thing since Princess Di in Lycra. Exciting or exploitative, however you see it, Japanese animation isn't about to disappear, and, as we reported back in issue seven (*Anime in the UK*), it's already making in-roads into the world of PC games. This is largely down to the efforts of us company Megatech. Under the guiding hand of Kenny Wu, a group of dedicated game designers, Anime artists and animators is doing its best to come up with new and exciting, interactive forms of Anime.

Megatech's first effort was *Cobra Mission*, an action and adventure game in which a private investigator explores the ultra-violent *Cobra Island*, having both vicious fights and sexual encounters. Unfortunately, the gameplay doesn't quite meet the promise of the graphics. Nevertheless, we felt that there was plenty of promise in the concept and we've been anxiously awaiting the next game, and here it is – and it proves to be something completely different.

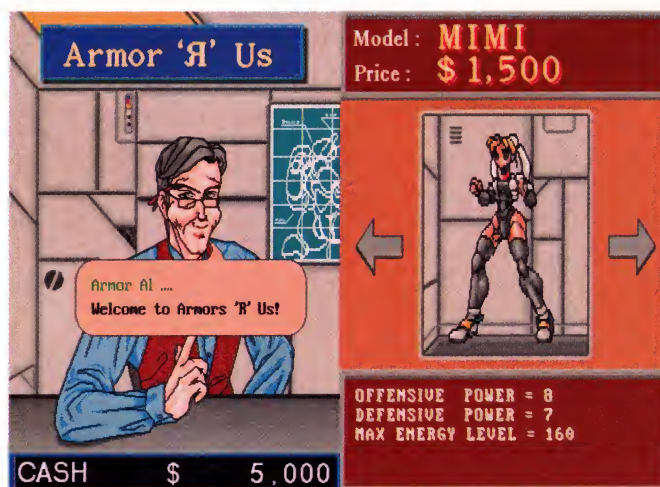
Blood and bodies

The year is 2053. A remote island has become infamous for two things: its beautiful women and a new blood sport: RoboFighting. The competitors in this brutal spectator sport are known as MeCha warriors, and, unlike the fighters of the past, they do not rely on their natural strength. Each MeCha warrior is clothed in a highly manoeuvrable and powerful suit of armour. This not only provides the warrior with protection and extra powers, but also an artificial strength. The upshot of this is that there are no physical restrictions on who can enter: man or woman, frail or strong, any MeCha warrior can challenge another knowing that the contest will be decided on skill and raw nerve alone.

This futuristic beat 'em-up will initially be available from retailers in a version suitable for players aged 13 or over, but an 18 version will be available via mail order after registration. Although the game has no official distribution channels over here, it will be available as an import or direct from Megatech in the us. ☐

Robo Babe

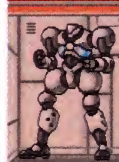
Cute? Don't be taken in by those 'butter wouldn't melt' looks. Once you've seen the animated sequence in which she armours up you'll have second thoughts about taking her on in the battlefield. This is just one example of the beautiful hand-drawn graphics that appear throughout the game.



Armor AI

Armour AI (or Armor AI, if you're pedantic) is the man you'll buy your armour from. It's important to get the best deal you can, but at the beginning of the game, you may have to compromise because you'll have a limited credit rating until you've won a few rounds. Below are the suits he has to offer in increasing order of power, capabilities and expense.

ROGUE
\$1,000



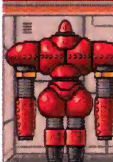
MIMI
\$1,500



MISTRESS
\$2,000



ANNA
\$2,200



SKY HOUND
\$3,000



SUN C
\$4,000



SILVER DRAGON
\$4,800





Old Man

This is the Old Man. He'll sell you spare parts to boost the power of your armour or replace parts that are broken or inadequate. Here are the parts he has in stock:

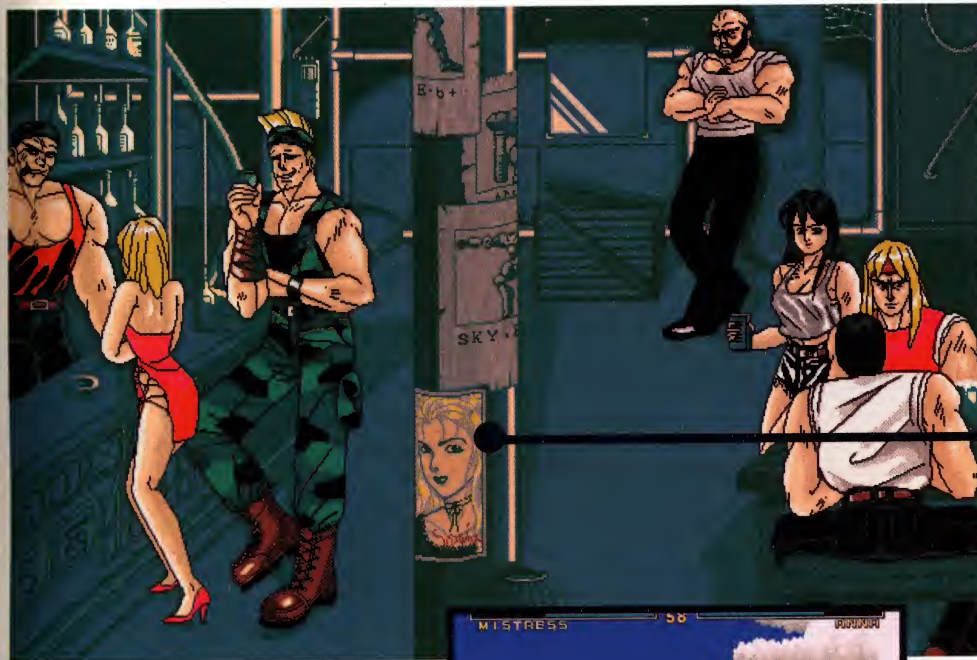
BATTERIES I, II AND III – Power packs at three strengths and increasing expense. You'll need one to power your suit.

BOOSTERS I, II AND III – These boost the power of your armour, and again, there are three strengths and price levels.

SHIELD – This protects your armour from fatal attacks, but it will only cut it in extreme situations.

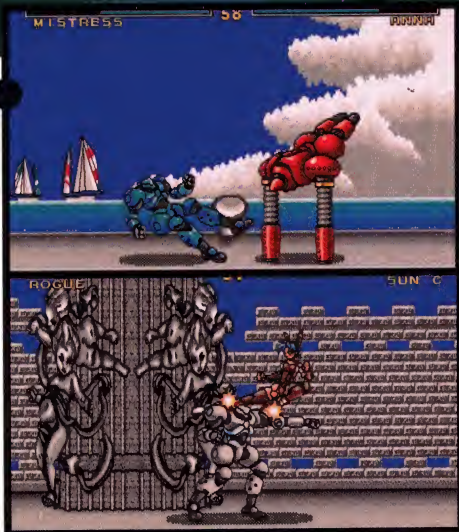
AI CHIP – This gives you the option to put your suit on 'cruise control' and perform a series of deadly moves without your intervention.

NEURAL AMP – Increases the ability of your suit when used with an AI Chip.



Into Battle

Finally, it's time to face the music and your opponent. Like other popular beat 'em-ups, both competitors are represented by power bars. Once a power bar is completely empty a knock-out has been achieved and the battle is over. The suits that the competitors wear are rated in three ways: offensive power, defensive power and maximum energy level. You can expect yours to be low until you've won a few battles. The winner gets her credit rating advanced and can use the cash to upgrade to a better suit or buy bolt-on extras.



The Bar

This is where you'll spend much of your time between battles and it's from here that you access the various departments that cater to the MeCha warriors.

Blueprint

Metal & Lace

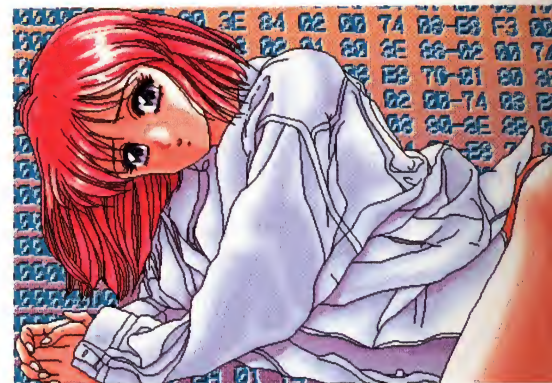
The Battle Of The Robo Babes

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OUT: Now



Pin-Ups

Perhaps the most openly provocative section of the game is this one, accessed via the posters in the bar, in which you get to meet your opponents in the flesh. Here the physical assaults tend to become verbal ones!

THE ULTIMATE



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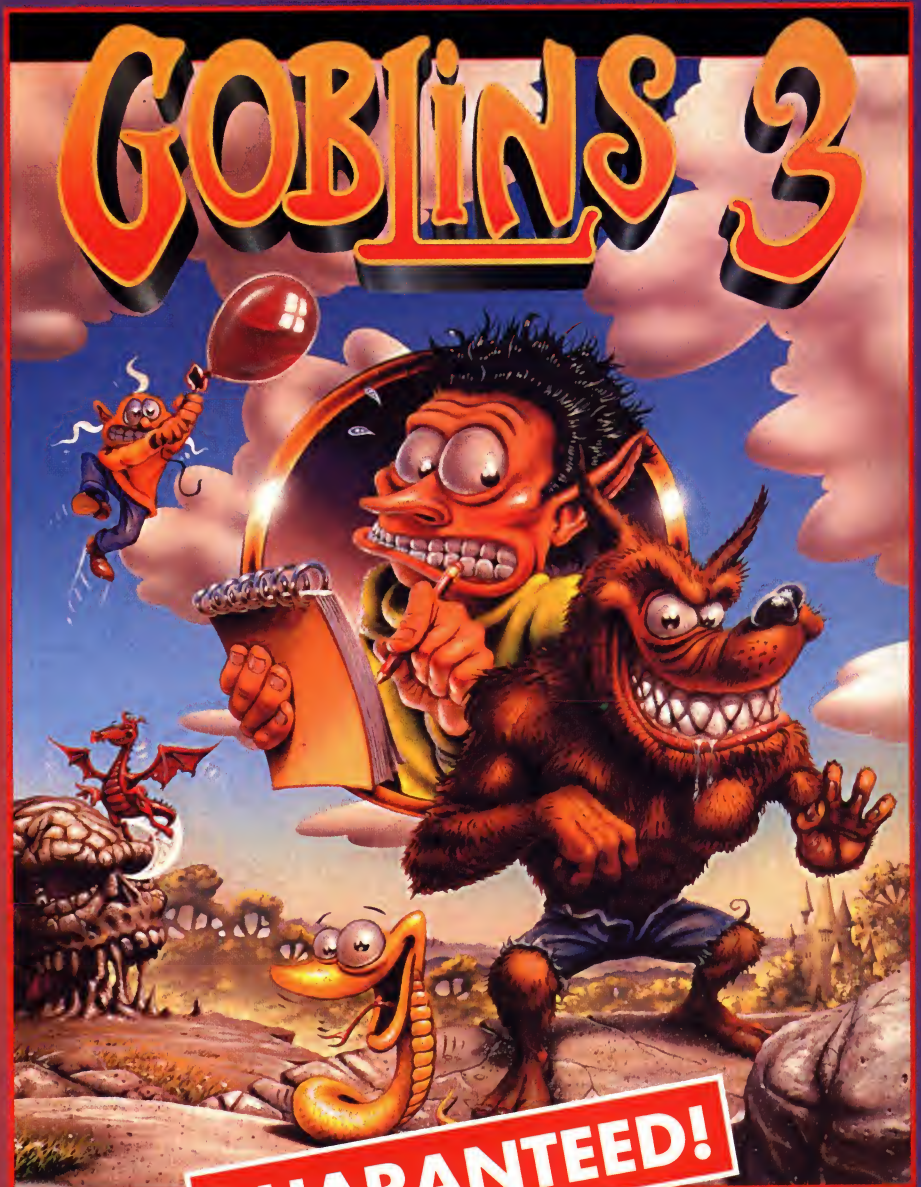


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of graphics,
ease of play".**

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COVER DISKS

We've a disk of two halves this month and it kicks off with an incredible football management game for Windows. If this isn't enough, check out part two – it's packed full of the best cheat programs, game enhancers and new scenarios for the current crop of best-selling games.



How to install your cover disk

So that we can pack as much as possible onto each disk, all of the games and demos are compressed. Before you can run them, you will need to install them onto your hard drive. To install the games, place your cover disk into a 3.5" disk drive and make that drive current by typing:

A:
or whatever drive letter is appropriate.
Now start the installation program by typing:

DISKZONE

The installation program will display a list of the programs on the disk. Use the cursor keys to highlight the program you wish to install and then press RETURN. The installation program will suggest a drive and directory in which the program is to be installed. If you are happy with the suggested location, simply press RETURN. If you want the program to be installed on an alternative drive or directory, backspace over the default location and enter an alternative, then press RETURN.

You should now see the files being listed as they are installed on your hard drive. Once the program has been successfully installed, you will be returned to the program list where you may select another program to install, or press ESC to exit to DOS.

Premier Challenge runs under Windows. To set the game up to run under windows, follow these steps.

1. Start Windows
2. Open a window in which you wish the *Premier Challenge* icon to appear (e.g. Games)
3. Select NEW from the FILE menu
4. Select PROGRAM ITEM and then OK
5. Select the first box and type PREMIER CHALLENGE
6. Select the second box and type C:\FOOTBALL\DEMO.EXE, changing the drive and directory name if you installed the game elsewhere
7. Select OK
8. Double click on the Premier Challenge icon to start the game

First Team Selection				
On Pitch		Squad		
Player Name	Posn	Player Name	Posn	Inj/Sus
▶ Digby	G	▶ Murray	D	
Horlock	D	Taylor	D	
Middleton	D	Phillips	M	
OSullivan	D	Hamon	A	
Thompson	D	Maskell	A	
Moncur	M	White	A	
Bodin	M			
Hazard	M			
Fenwick	A			
Summerbee	A			
Ling	A			
On Bench		Current Formation: 4-2-4		
Player Name	Posn	Auto Add <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
▶ Hammond	G			
MacLaren	M			
Mutch	A			

Squad

☒ First

☐ Reserves

☐ Youth

Play

Opposition

Formation

Save

Drop

Close

THIS VERSION of *Premier Challenge* allows you to guide a Premier League side through ten weeks of the season, picking squads and formations along the way. Make those crucial decisions, like should you play with a sweeper, wing halves or just stick a big guy up front and rely on the long ball?

Starting over

On starting the game you will be offered the manager's job at a Premier League side. If you have no desire at all to manage this side (i.e. it's Wimbledon) then reject the offer and you'll be able to select the team of your choice from the list provided.

Once your team has been loaded, pull down the Club menu and look at your squad. All the players you have access to in your first team are listed here. You don't have any numbers on screen to look at. In *Premier Challenge* you have to assess the players by seeing how they perform in matches. What is provided, as a guide, is the ability to order them by various skills.

The training box contains a number of options, though only one can be selected at a time. Essentially it sets the overall emphasis of the regime that you are implementing throughout the club. These are not all the skills that the game has built into it, but they are practically the only ones that can be affected by training (remember: players like Glen Hoddle are just born, you can't make them). One thing to point out, though, is that every player has a maximum potential ability in every area. Even if you set training to 'dribble' and leave it there forever, you will not produce a team of Pelés!

Play the game

Now we are really at the centre of *Premier Challenge*. From the menu, select Fixtures. The fixtures screen will automatically display the next relevant fixture listing. From this screen you can watch any (or all) of the matches being played. The only match that you must watch is your own.

To watch a match: Click on the fixture, and click on watch.

To play matches without watching: Click on Play, the Match Reports screen is shown, click Play again and all matches are played by the computer teams.

To play the match that your team is in, select your fixture and click on Watch. You are presented with your First Team Selection Window. Select your squad by clicking on the players you want. Then select your formation by moving to the formation screen and positioning all your players. Remember to return to this screen whenever you make changes in the squad.

The match display itself has a number of configurable items (e.g. speed); to set them, select the Options item from the menu.

That should get you going. Keep an eye on your league position and see how far you can get in ten weeks. Remember after that the game will end; if you want another go you'll have to re-install it.

If you still need help, log onto the directory in which you have installed the game and type:

HELP

If you need a printed copy of the manual, switch on your printer, load it with continuous stationery and type:

COPYINFO

Please note that some features mentioned in the manual are not available in this version of the game.

February

Second Half

On this disk you will also find a selection of cheat programs, game enhancements and scenarios. These will be installed to a series of directories within the directory that you select in the installation program. We don't have space to explain the use of each one here, but for further information, you should make the directory containing the program you wish to use current and type **HELP**. For printed information, switch on your printer, load it with continuous paper and type **COPYINFO**.

Windowless?

If you do not have Windows™ on your machine then simply send your cover disk to T'ai Chi Software, 16 Wellgate Road, Luton, Beds LU4 9TD and they will return it with a DOS version of the game included. This is also the address to contact if you wish to buy the full version of *Premier Challenge* complete with transfers, tactics and performance charts not available in this version.

IMPORTANT

P C Zone makes every effort to ensure that its disks and the programs contained on them are fault-free, virus-free and work as advertised. However, PC Zone and its suppliers and distributors can accept no liability for loss or damage to software or hardware however caused. The cover disk supplied with this issue is used at the discretion and risk of individual readers. Use of the cover disk implies acceptance of these terms.

Some of the programs supplied on this disk are shareware. They are supplied as an evaluation service to our readers. If you like these programs and intend to go on using them you should register them, in return for which you will usually receive updated or additional programs and other bonuses.

Some of the programs supplied will modify existing files on your machines. To avoid loss of data, please read all the accompanying documentation carefully and always make a back-up of important files before using these programs. If you are unsure about how to use a program properly then please refrain from using it. All the programs supplied are used at your own risk.

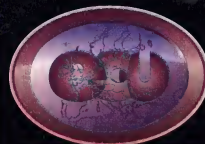
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If your cover disk won't load, or doesn't operate as expected, you can call our technical helpline: Matthew on 0274 736990

The helpline operates between 9am and 4pm weekdays. If possible, please have your computer operating and your cover disk ready when you phone the helpline. If your computer is not near the phone, please note down as much information about your system and the nature of the problem as you can and have pen and paper handy when you call.

If, having called the helpline, you are advised that the disk needs returning, please place it in a padded envelope, along with your return address and a stamp for 19p and send it to: PC Zone Disk Returns, TIB PLC, TIB House, 11 Edward Street, Bradford, BD4 7BH.

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≥ "So chummer, you want to know about runnin'?

≥ "The Net's the most dangerous cyber-dream you'll ever have, 'cept it's not a dream. You gotta be ruthless and quick, huggin' the lattice like an Olthan lungworm on a Borian air-grazer. Once you jack in, it's just you and your Trace.

≥ "Like I always said, Netrunnin' is like a drug, the speed gets you higher than a 'ject of Cephilene Blue, but a mistake'll leave you deader than a jacked out straightliner.

≥ "That chum, is as permanent as it gets . . ."

≥ END

≥ GROTHAN JHIR, ex-Netrunner.

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THIS MONTH'S PANEL

Turn to page 28 and find out what subscribers, John Daw, Ryan King, Rupert Watters and Tony Wyers thought of *Alone In The Dark 2*.

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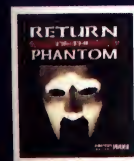
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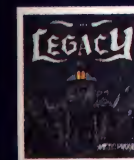
horror at the hideous beast that stalks the Paris Opera House and marvel at the superb sound effects. A great game, recommended by the *PC Zone* team as ideal for players new to the graphic adventure genre.



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DEEP IN THE HEART



ORIGIN'S INT

It's amazing what you can cram into two days. Having already been knocked out by *Ultima VIII* and *Warbirds 1917-18*, I'd barely time to pick myself up and count my teeth before Origin's first foray into the world of the Interactive Movie gave me a swift boot in the stomach, quickly followed by a chop in the kidneys from *System Shock* before *Pacific Strike* moved in for the kill. I entered Origin a healthy cynical journalist, I exited a gibbering mass of superlatives.



Richard Garriott with Paul, who's trying to pretend he's used to leaning on Lambourghinis

HOME HAUNTING

It's a tough life being a journalist,' I mused, being driven up to Richard Garriott's house in his lambourghini. It's an even tougher life trying to get out of a lambourghini in anything approaching a stylish manner when you're overfed, overweight and unfit. Lucky then that I'm not (ahem).

Even in its day-to-day form Richard (or Lord British if you prefer)'s house is quite unusual; with swords, suits of armour, antique toys and a weird and wonderful collection of orreries. That's to say nothing of an African voodoo doll, a collection of glass eyes and an Uzi sub machine-gun. Add to this that all bar one room is linked by secret passages and that there's an observatory at the top of the house, and you begin to get an idea that this is not your average two-up two-down in Letchworth.

This is nothing compared to what the house is like every alternate year when Richard hosts a Haunted House. People queue for four days to get in for the free adventure complete with shrinking rooms, trap-doored coffins, pillars of fire – a real interactive adventure. At the end of the last haunting, journalists asked people as they left if it had been worth the four-day wait in the wind and rain. The unanimous reply: 'If I thought I could get in again I'd go back to the end of the queue.'

OF TEXAS II

The second part of **Paul Dakin's** exclusive report from the offices of the embarrassingly creative Origin Systems Inc, birthplace of many a classic (nay Ultimate) game.

INTERACTIVE MOVIE

INTERACTIVE MOVIE 1

T

HE PROBLEM WITH a visit to a software house like Origin is that you are highly likely to run out of superlatives very early on. In fact I'd used most of mine up on the hotel room in which I was staying, so by the time *Interactive Movie 1* came along I was dangerously speechless.

Elsewhere in this issue Paul Presley gives us the benefit of his musings on the world of the interactive movie. He has the seen the future and it is *Rebel Assault*. Well I have seen the future too, and it is called *Interactive Movie 1*, or *BioForge*... or... well whatever Origin end up calling it.

The game starts with you waking up in a futuristic room and finding you've become half man and half robot. You've barely time to curse the latest round of NHS cut-backs before a mechanical Florence Nightingale starts trying to administer some fairly Victorian medicine. From then on it's action and adventure all the way.

IM1's most immediately cinematic feel comes from the use of cameras (surprisingly enough). Rather than a first-person perspective or endless viewpoints, the game is viewed from a series of fixed camera positions - IM2, which is already being planned will allow you to pan and zoom these cameras. As well as showing the immediate action, the cameras will also allow the biologically-confused hero to view other locations through a monitor. Director Ken Demarest (who was lead programmer on *Ultima VII*) admits that he's more than a little keen to have a sequence where you see yourself on a monitor watching yourself on a monitor watching yourself on a monitor ad infinitum.

Metal mickey

As well as the structure of the game, the movement of the character is essential to an interactive movie. The characters are animated using skeletons inside polygonal skins. Realism is achieved by fixing sensors on a real person at various joints. The position changes of these joints during a certain movement is then recorded and executed by the computer characters when they wish to perform the same movement. Speed and smoothness is aided by the computer taking less



A collection of stunning grabs from the game which started as IM1 and by now is probably BioForge. Note the skeleton system used for building up the animated mutant dinosaur.



Ken Demarest, a man looking understandably pleased with his work.

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"The graphics are superb..."

One of the best flight sims I have ever played".

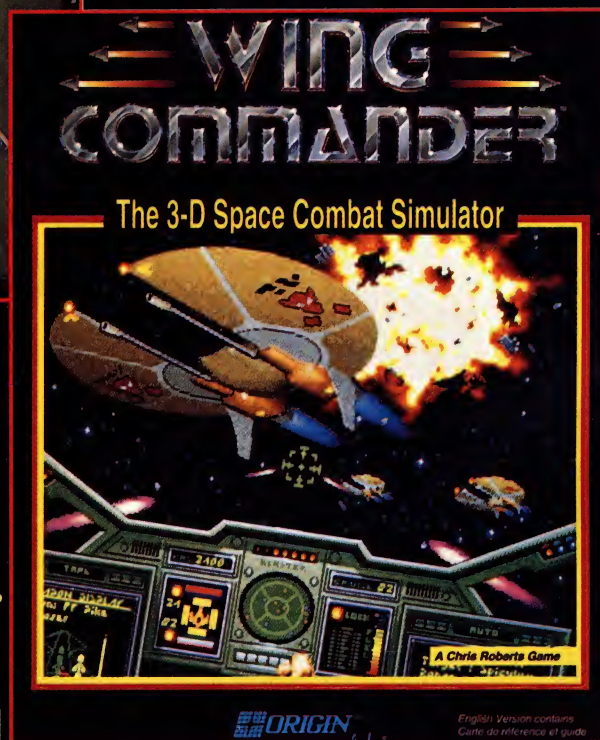
PC LEISURE - 5 STARS

"Exquisite - it's got the right stuff... very nice indeed".

ACE - TRAILBLAZER 900

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1 4 . 9 9



You're a starfighter pilot, the best of the best,
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* See the action from all angles using Wing Commander's player-controlled camera.

* Count on your wingman, a skilled pilot, thanks to the advanced Wing Commander artificial intelligence system, but don't get cocky: the enemy flies intelligently too!

"You ain't seen nothing better..."

super atmosphere...it'll blow your mind".

RAZE - 93%

"One of the finest games of all time".

AMIGA ACTION

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1 4 . 9 9

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Sequel to the award-winning fantasy role-playing game from Mindcraft.

At the other end of the world, far across the sea of Oshmar, lies the dire continent of Gurlux, where the Children of Light are preparing a campaign against the growing Forces of Darkness. But the vile Leaders of Darkness have trapped the lost guardians of the Magic Candle in evil candles of their own.

- * Assign tasks to your companions while you and the rest of your party continue on the adventure.
- * Intelligent conversation with non-player characters who have independent personalities.
- * Automatic mapping and note-taking.

"An excellent example of a true roleplaying game".

-PC REVIEW

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"It's very, very nice".

- ZERO HERO 92%

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- * Captivating original music scores.
- * Immediately begin playing and enjoying.
- * Longterm play value - you may never see it all!

"Excellent gameplay, well designed"

- PC REVIEW

© Origin Systems Inc.



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The only flight simulation to provide detailed daily war update reports.

The only flight simulation to present the latest in aerodynamic technology introducing ECOP cockpits, backwinder AAMS, supercruise, stealth and more!

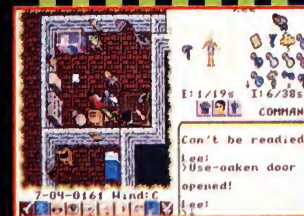
F-29 is that flight simulation. F-29 Retaliator presents the fastest and most detailed graphic environment ever seen in a flight simulation. You have the choice of two of the world's most advanced aircraft - the F-22 ATF and F-29.

"Exhilarating, thrilling."

- THE ONE - 95%

"Simply the best."

- C&VG - 96%



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The graphics on IM1 go from the excellent to... well whatever's better than excellent... when the game moves outside.



Underworld Out Of This World

As anyone who has read more than one copy of *PC Zone* will know, *Ultima Underworld II* has a rather special place in our hearts. In one corner of the office is the *Underworld* Temple before which everyone must perform obsequence twice a day.

Imagine then the excitement when I mentioned that Looking Glass Technologies, the guys behind *Underworld*, were working with Origin on a new first-person perspective project. The game, which went from *Bios Fear* to *System Shock* in the time I was there, aims to combine 'the depth you'd expect from an Origin game with the action of *Shadowcaster/Wolfenstein*'. Can they achieve that? Producer Warren Spector (he of *Warbirds* in issue ten) rates Doug Church, of Looking Glass Technologies, as 'one of the best programmers I've ever met', which isn't a bad start.

System Shock (or whatever it ends up being called) is a sci-fi game in which you take the role of a Hacker (though not HackMaster™) who wakes up on board a deserted space station which is heading to earth loaded with viruses. You must overcome the computer Shodan which will do everything it can to eradicate you.

Fans of *Underworld* are promised even more realism and atmosphere with a much more real 3D effect than *Wolfenstein*. Floor surfaces have a slope to them, your character has more realistic posture, being able to lean over ledges/round corners etc. and there's a full 360 degree view. Each of the nine levels has its own theme both visually and musically, while you have to do battle with eight kinds of mutant and nine kinds of robot.

There is a strong computer feel to *System Shock*. You need to make use of both cyberspace and E-Mail in order to progress. Plus various items you pick up will have revisions or upgrades i.e the energy shield will have versions one to three each more powerful than the next.

Verily a game for HackMasters™ and TruePlayers™ alike.



points of reference than might be assumed. If you move your arm up, the elbow follows automatically; the computer can calculate that move for itself without having to take a separate reading from the elbow. There was some talk of displaying this system at the Las Vegas Computer Entertainment Show by wiring up members of the public and displaying their movements – real interactive computing.

Suits us

IM1 is more than just an outstanding development of the concept of interactive movies – it's an outstandingly visual and atmospheric game. You just have to take my word for how good the sound is, although I can tell you it's fully digitised on four channels (as with *Ultima VIII*) and sounds different inside and outside the building.

What do we care for such aural marvels, though. Just look at the graphics. The really impressive moment – the part that makes you sit up and stop wandering if you left the coffee machine on in your hotel room – is the reflective suit. It's brilliant. When wearing it you reflect everything around you (well you'd be asking for your money back at the Reflective Suit Shop if you didn't) which looks simply stunning. Ken is keen to point out that although there are walls that don't really exist in *IM1* (since the game is viewed from fixed camera angles so you'd never be able to see them) they still get reflected in the suit. He's less keen to explain how this is done.

The concept of the interactive movie was much discussed during my time at Origin. Ken admits that no one is yet clear what an interactive movie is but he's sure great chunks of full motion video is not the way forward. *IM1* is closer to interactive movie. 'I am confident that this is one of the best examples in the world'. In fact it's so cinematic that it has forced the game designers to relearn their trade and act more like film directors; taking into account techniques such as camera angles, cutting and the like. Added to this is the challenge that, whereas a film director can predict exactly what's going to happen, a game director is at the mercy of the player. Mind you, at least a game director doesn't have to worry about his main character storming off to their caravan with a cry of 'Nobody understands me'.

PACIFIC STRIKE



IF *IM1* WAS THE MOST obviously impressive game that Origin were showing off, then *Pacific Strike* was the one I most wanted to play. Producer Eric Hyman and team have taken the *Strike Commander* engine and put it in a much more suitable environment.

The game starts with you being posted to Pearl Harbour just before the Japanese attack, which is rather like buying a new house in Normandy in the first week of June 1944. From the start of the game you're thrown straight into the deep end of the Pacific War, flying all the major campaigns of the war in ten different theatres. ☛

A day in the life of a Pacific fighter pilot. Get up, shoot down a couple of Japs, say something gratuitously tough and aggressive, get killed and drift into the Hollywood sunset.

The work on both the aircrafts' look and handling has been extensive and is enhanced with texturing on both sea and sky, but you can gauge all that from the screenshots and Origin's track record. Where *Pacific Strike* really grabs the attention is in the degree of interaction with the course of history.

History man

Eric is critical of games like *X-Wing* where you have to complete a mission before moving onto the next. Not so with *Pacific Strike* in which in order to go onto the next mission, you simply need to stay alive, but failure to complete missions will lead to problems later on. An aircraft carrier not sunk when it should have been may well turn up later, complete with aircraft, thereby dramatically altering the odds.

Taking this a stage further, the game changes depending on how you are doing. As is the way with games of this ilk, success in missions leads to promotion (there never seems to be an option to call up your high-ranking uncle to see if he can't pull a few strings). However, promotion is important as more than a

simple pandering to your fragile ego. The higher your rank the more control you have over your own destiny. For example, at one stage in the Pacific War a squadron of Devastator torpedo bombers (a plane with the aeronautical qualities of a large wooden box) set out on a near suicidal raid. Unsurprisingly, only one came back. If you're still a low ranker then it'll be a case of: 'See that plane with the aeronautical qualities of

a large wooden box? That's for you that is?' Whereas if you're an officer and a gentleman you can make sure you're flying escort or somewhere else altogether, leaving the dirty work to others – the sure mark of a gentleman.

Long-time Loser

Your effect on the course of the war in *Pacific Strike* is such that, in a bizarre way, there are some advantages to doing badly. If you fail a significant number of your missions then with your lack of air power, Enola Gay will be shot down and the war will drag on into 1946. Bad news for the poor bloody infantry who'll have to take part in a messy invasion of the Japanese mainland; good news for you who'll get an extra year of action and the chance to go up against a couple of the prototype aircraft that never actually saw action.

Alternatively, if you start doing well (a course of action which will have a negative affect on the Japanese AI as defeat demoralises them) then you will get the chance to run a super raid. In 1944 the hard-liners of the Japanese Government and army (which amounted to pretty much the same thing) met in Okinawa. If you manage to bomb the Government Offices during the meeting then the Japanese war effort will collapse and they'll surrender in 1944 just in time for your holidays.

I can vouch for the quality of graphics and gameplay. If the interaction/storyline is anything like as good as intended then this could be the flight sim of 1994. Mind you you'll need a 486 to run it so you'd better get saving. ☒



A PC, an Eric Hyman and a funeral scene (Well you try to think of a caption for it)

Wing Wing

Origin seem to have an ability to produce series' of games that attract near fanatical followings. There's *Ultima*, of course, and then there's *Wing Commander*, with its huge band of devotees. So far there's been *Wing Commander I* and *II* plus *Wing Commander Academy*. Logic and numeracy suggests a *Wing Commander III* should not be far away.

Well it's not too far away. Chris Roberts, the man behind *Wing Commander* and *Strike Commander* is working on *Wing Commander III* with a view to a Christmas 1994 release. *Wing Commander III* will probably be the last in the series, taking the war with the Kilraith to its conclusion.

There was little to see of the game but enough to show that in terms of the 3D graphics alone, this is a great step forward. True to their high-end reputation *Wing Commander III* will be SVGA and CD-ROM only. Not only that, but it will be designed on the assumption that players will have CD Drives that are double speed. Yet another argument for upgrading.

Closer to the finishing line is *Wing Armada* (a working title, which means that the game could end up being called anything – except, probably, *Wing Armada*). This is the game to end a thousand rows about who's the best *Wing Commander* pilot. This is *Wing Commander* head-to-head. Whether you fight via modem, network or on a split-screen this is where you really prove who's best. The game uses the *Strike Commander* system for graphics but the AI and physics are straight from *Wing Commander*. *Wing Armada* is due for release round about April so that gives you a few months to get practising.

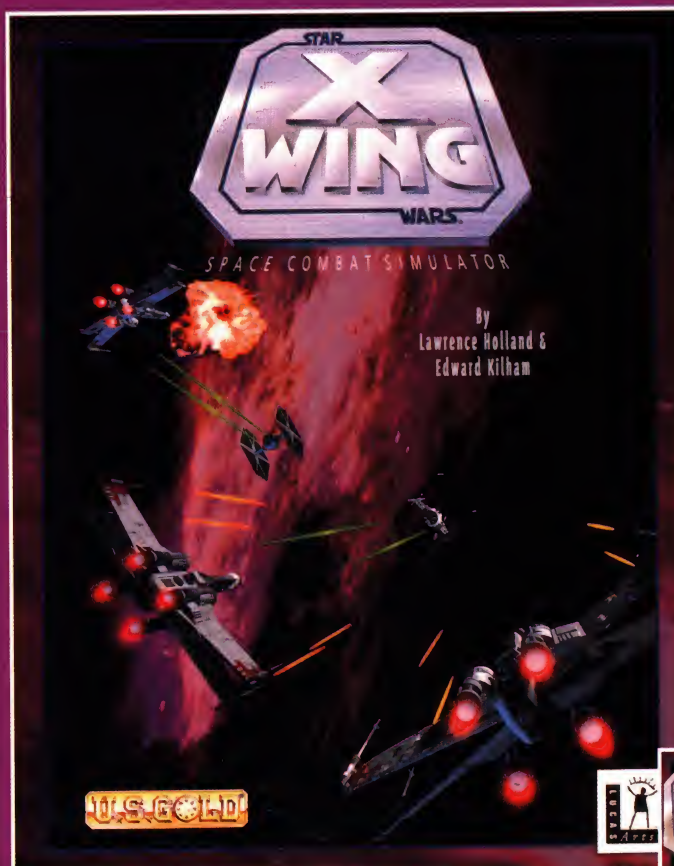


Chris Roberts grimaces at Paul's painfully weak headline.

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X-WING™ ...

PC REVIEW 8/10

"Without question, X-Wing defines the current state of the art space based fight and flight simulation."

PC ZONE 88%

"...one of the most addictive games I've played..."

PC FORMAT 87%

"It looks and plays great...it takes the space bound flight 'n' fight sim about as far as it can go."



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The Stars



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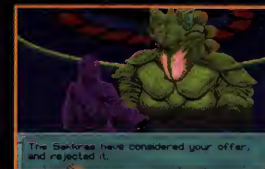
Peoples warred.

Civilizations clashed.

Then, slowly, technology triumphed.

Populations increased.

Peace reigned across the world and the
first tentative steps were taken to other
world colonization.



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PC ZONE



reviews

Games reviews is what PC Zone is all about and this is where the reviews start. On the next 50 pages you'll find reviews of all the latest software. However, before you launch yourself into the most authoritative reviews pages around you might like to check up on what it all means.

THE SCORE

All games receive an overall mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it 'Out of a hundred' then you go ahead and call it 'Out of a hundred'. You can even call it 'Ernest' if you like.

As a rough guide to interpreting the scores are the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times...)

90+ (PC Zone Classic)

Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70-79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However, weaknesses do not seriously impair playability, and it has a reasonably long life.

60-69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game, you'll like this; if not, you won't' category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa.

50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

40-49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution.

20-29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10-19 Bin jobs

0-9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

THE SPECS

Is there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Well yes, coming home and finding your cat on fire for instance, but we can't do anything about that. With this technical box we can at least make sure you know what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

WHAT'S ON OUR HARD DISK?

Some games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This (in no particular order) is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

- 1 Elite II
- 2 Sam And Max
- 3 Alone In The Dark 2
- 4 Doom
- 5 Starcontrol 2

PC ZONE score

A game of truly
monumental
averageness

50

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IN PERSPECTIVE

Often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. In Perspective attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of similar examples. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other.

IN PERSPECTIVE

A Better Game

The Game Being Reviewed

A Worse Game





Alone In The Dark 2

(Top) Nope, it's neither Pinocchio nor Mr Nicholson in his Joker guise, but it is another Jack, this time of the 'in the box' variety. Don't be fooled by that mean and nasty exterior: beneath it lurks an even meaner, quite despicable interior; he won't be nice to you either. (Above) It's Mr Carnby once more and his prostrate pal is an unknown who's recently divested himself of his clogs.

With the arrival of *Alone In The Dark 2* in the office, **Andy Clarkson** sheepishly asked if he could review it. Dressed in a little pink dress and clutching a teddy-bear, at least he looked the part.





The wicked witch has captured you; from now on your key to freedom is as Grace, who should be neither seen nor heard.



Carnby obviously has a lot of time for hanging around. Back on board, the gangsters revert to pirates.



EVERYTHING STARTS with an 'A'. This isn't strictly true but it sounds appropriate when you want to talk about an Artful, Atmospheric Adventure game. *Alone In The Dark* starts with an 'A' and was

undoubtedly the adventure romp of 1992/93. Playing it was akin to reading a good book. Not a Jackie Collins 'Old-rich-tarts-get-shag-off-young-execs' type of good book, but an eerie horror-stroke-thriller, nail-biter of the Edgar Allan Poe kind. And better than a book, it was graphic and interactive: the mix between puzzle solving and arcade action was excellent and the animation was startling.

Although many games have harnessed these qualities, the difference with *Alone In The Dark* was atmosphere, a word much bandied about at the time. This was due to the spooky context-sensitive music, the vector-based graphics that gave the figures their odd angular features, the story which lent such depth to the characters and the old House On The Hill location in which it all took place. This atmosphere consumed the player, and when the car pulled away with the hero in the final scene, there was that mixed feeling of satisfaction and a deep regret that it had to end. And similarly, when you finish a novel by a favourite author and you know they are going to take at least a year to finish their next work, a kind of emptiness sets in. Well, finally that emptiness can be quashed as the

most eagerly-awaited adventure game sequel, *Alone In The Dark 2* is winging its way to the stores as you read this.

I won't waste any more of your time on over-long intros. I know everyone wants to know 'Is it as good as the first?' And yes, it most certainly is. 'Could it, perchance, be better than the first?' Is the Pope Catholic? Infogrames' programming and scripting team has been very busy indeed over the last 12 months, adding extra depth of gameplay (it is now twice as large) and sprucing up the graphics and game engine of what was surely the classic game of 1992. But before we get into the wealth of improvements, let's start with the plot.

The Untouchable

Scriptwriter Hubert Chardot had more than a mouthful of croissant to chew in tackling this sequel. For the uninitiated, *Alone 1* was loosely based on the work of occult writer, H. P. Lovecraft (whose spooky stories also form the basis of Infogrames' other chart-topping adventure classic, *Shadow Of The Comet*). This gave rise to the creation of a house brimming with ghoulies and ghosties, pentangles and goggle-eyed monsters. *Alone 2* continues with the occult theme, but this time it's all caught up in voodoo. The monster element is made up of a motley crew of 18th century pirates who made a pact with a voodoo witch in exchange

EMILY HARTWOOD VS GRACE SAUNDERS

I make no bones about the fact that this is a non-contest from the off. Emily Hartwood was the alter-ego of Edward Carnby in *Alone 1* (you decided whether to play as Emily or Edward). This made no real difference to the gameplay, but was one for the girls (certainly not for the boys as Emily, despite her womanly vector-based figure, was not what you would call a 'looker'). Emily had a serious hormone imbalance making her move in the same way as Edward. She was a strong woman capable of taking a beating and dishing it out as good as any man. She was not 'cute'.

Grace Saunders, on the other hand, is a whole different kettle of polygons. Grace is unadulterated cuteness and her movements are enough to make the coldest of hearts turn broody. She skips, she stomps, she crawls, she puts her thumbs in her ears and wiggles her fingers in a 'Ner Ner Na Ner Ner' kind of way, she carries a teddy bear for God's sake.

The inclusion of Grace gives the player two games in one. The puzzle-solving remains with both characters but the combat scenarios of Carnby are transformed to cuddly solutions. Grace still has to avoid the pirates but she can't open big doors, she's

frightened of going down steep stairways, she's a lot slower than Carnby and obviously can't wield a sawn-off shotgun. What she can do is go into places that Carnby can't. She hides in cupboards and creeps around behind objects. And this

babe is no dumb toddler – if you find the right implements, which can be completely innocuous substances like marmalade, she can lay all manner of fiendish traps to stop unwitting gangsters. And thankfully, in these troubling days of violence towards children, she can't be killed, only caught.

Sorry Emily Hartwood, but you're just not my type.



EMILY



GRACE



'T WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

Christmas Eve 1924 and washed-up private dick, Edward Carnby wasn't feeling full of goodwill. The telegram from Striker, a big man, not more than six feet tall and not wider than a beer truck, was convinced One Eyed Jack had kidnapped the Saunders girl. He was going up

to Jack's coastal mansion to investigate. He hadn't been seen since. If there's one thing that turned Carnby's guts it was folk messing with children. Clutching his .38 and a bagful of explosives, Carnby chartered a cab to Hell's Kitchen. Jack and his cronies would get more than a sackful of presents down the chimney this Christmas.

1 Carnby knew how to make an entrance. 20lbs of X-rated Acme TNT blew a kiss goodbye to the gates of Hell's Kitchen. The sentry degenerate pulled the short straw. His Yuletide surprise came unwrapped and blew up in his face. But Carnby spent his life mixing it with this kind of unearthly low-life. Experience showed green fellas don't take a pounding lying down.

2 Ringing the bell on One Eyed Jack's door is no way to die of old age. World-weary Carnby ducked into the maze. But this was no Hampton Court. Behind every bush there was a zombie in a crombie packing a pump-action shotgun. Cocksure, the cronies introduced themselves with a medium-pitched 'Good Morning Sir'. This was the clarion call to unload a heap full of Thompson shrapnel into their breasts. Tommy Guns make the grade but extra cartridges are sparse – don't waste 'em.

3 The maze had more twists than a scenic railway but lady luck rolled a seven for Carnby. He stumbled across a card deck. One Eyed Jack was a notorious gambler and this theme runs throughout the game. 'Que signifie?' Laying a size nine gumshoe on the right suit must lead someplace but tread warily, a dud hand can lead to death.

4 Carnby played the right hand and took a nose-dive to the cellar. Secret passages and underground caverns were the staple diet of *Alone 1* and the sequel turned out to be loaded with both. You can bet your last shot of bourbon for every clue down here, there'll be a blobby sourpuss on your tail. This pooch stood out like a kangaroo in a dinner jacket; others ain't so accomodating.

5 The cellar was a dead end, deader than something very dead. Carnby headed back to the shrubbery. The statue looked as inviting as a four-day old chop suey that maggots call home. But it was time to drop the artillery and use the grey matter. Grappling hook plus rope plus statue. Carnby hooked up and 'open sesame'.

6 The statue led to the cellars. The tub of lard in the sharp suit was Striker. He was colder than an Eskimo's nose and plainly didn't get far on his quest for the kid. This proves to be bad news for One Eyed Jack. The stakes were raised and Carnby wasn't afraid of trouble. Trouble was his business.

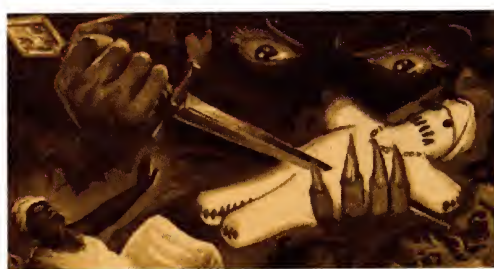
7 Inside, Carnby found a shooting gallery. It was a long narrow room, not very bright, not very cheerful. At one end two goons indulged themselves in much-needed target practice. Unfortunately, Carnby was the target. Sizing up the re-load time on their pump-action pistols, Carnby dropped his shoulder and threw some weight into his punch knocking them from here to Denver.

8 Merry Christmas, Mr Carnby. There's more than one way to fool a zombie and dressing up as Chris Cringle proves the point. In Hell's Kitchen's kitchen Carnby Claus prepared to fry the fat guy in the chef's get-up. He knew this was just the beginning. He had Santa's Big Red Suit now, but these zombies weren't proving to be good or nice.





(Left) Cute that zombies still believe in Father Christmas. (Below left) Walking the plank; bungee-jumping minus elastic. (Below) Whatever incarnation he's in, Jack's a nasty piece of work. (Below right) Unhand that poor Pillsbury doughboy, vile madam!



for immortality. Still alive and kicking in 1924, the pirate leader, One Eyed Jack, and his henchmen are continuing their villainy in 1920s-style as bootleggers. All operations are run from Jack's mansion, Hell's Kitchen, off the coast of California. A lot of infamous racketeers were up to this sort of stuff during Prohibition and for anyone who was not a raving Bible basher, illegally selling alcohol was not the most heinous crime of the century. But One Eyed Jack is no Al Capone or Dutch Schultz, so to keep his immortality he has to sacrifice a young girl every 100 years. This raises the evil crime stakes slightly and gives good reason for the extreme violence that is about to follow.

This is the premise of *Alone 2*. You play Private Investigator Edward Carnby (the same character as *Alone 1*) who gets a note from his pal, Striker, telling him that a young girl, Grace Saunders, has been kidnapped and is being holed up at Hell's Kitchen. *Alone 2* turns the strategy of its predecessor on its head. Instead of starting off in the house, finding a way to destroy it and getting the hell out, Carnby now needs to break in and rescue the girl. Surviving long enough to achieve this aim is the difficult bit. The house is heavily guarded by zombie pirates who, in the 1920s setting, have shed their swashbuckling image for long overcoats, trilbies and pump-action shotguns. These are cocky, arrogant Anglo-Italian gangsters of the Untouchables era but, like any King of Crime's cronies, they're patsies really. Your job as Carnby is to find the correct way to mow down or avoid these muthas wherever possible. Some can simply be blown away; others need special attention.

As with *Alone 1*, the characterisations are intense. Infogrames doesn't just throw characters into a game without explaining their motivations. One Eyed Jack's crew are detailed in the literature you find on your travels (which will also reveal clues on how to kill them) and each creature is superbly sculptured from blow-pipe wielding chefs, machine

gun/accordion-toting musicians and debonair karate experts. The leader of the pack, One Eyed Jack, and the black witch, Elizabeth Jarrett, also reveal their life-stories in a series of flashbacks which in the disk-based game appear as a set of 2D stills, although it is rumoured that in the CD-ROM version these will be full animations.

Baby boom

The most startling difference in gameplay is in the choice of characters. *Alone 1* gave the choice of playing as Carnby or Emily Hartwood for the womanly interest. *Alone 2* gives no option, Carnby is the only ace in the deck. But the turning point comes when you are captured and start to direct little Grace, the girl kidnapped by One Eyed Jack. Grace is the only hope of survival and her mission is to find a way to free Carnby. This offers a new dimension to the gameplay as the too-too cute Grace can't perform the adult macho moves of Carnby and the game switches to a hilarious extended version of hide and seek between this gorgeous animated toddler and the ferocious zombies (see boxout on Grace vs Emily Hartwood).

Comedy plays a big part in *Alone 2*, from waddling chubby chefs and drunken ballerinas to Grace's teddy bear. But you'll have to discover them for yourself as some of the funniest scenes are in the solutions to the puzzles. One of the aspects which would have sold this game, had it been out before Christmas, is the Santa Claus suit. At a certain point in the game Carnby finds a Big Red Suit. By putting this on, some of the zombies will not attack you. Why? Because they're big kids at heart and still believe in Father Christmas.

Alone 2 is also stacked with film references – you find out that Eliot Ness has been on the tail of One Eyed Jack and that the new head of police for San Francisco is one Lieutenant Callaghan, otherwise known as Crazy Harry (aka Dirty Harry). And, I'm not sure about this one, but One Eyed Jack's was

READERS' REVIEWS

This month, four more of our wise subscribers cast their critical eyes over the game of the month and tell us what they think. If you're a member of Club PC and you'd like to take part in future readers' visits, please drop us a line and we'll put you onto our list of victims.



John Daw

(London Underground Worker)

John loves everything from strategy games to platform games. *Railroad Tycoon* is, appropriately, his particular favourite and he's currently getting a kick out of *Freddy Pharkas and Cosmo*. John is familiar with *Alone In The Dark*, but he didn't get on very well with it, largely because he found that 'the controls were very awkward – turning seemed haphazard'. Understandably, then, he was disappointed that no attempt had been made to remedy this in *Alone In The Dark 2*, but he did concede that it has 'bags of atmosphere' and he liked the improvements in the graphics. Even so, he will probably wait till this appears as a budget game before buying it.



Ryan King

(Year 2, Haberdasher's School)

Ryan's main likes are *Wolfenstein 3D* and *The Secret Of Monkey Island*, but he's also keen on flight sims like *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*. Ryan was pretty impressed by *Alone In The Dark 2* and got quite involved in playing the review copy here in the office. He felt that the graphics were good, although the movement of the characters was 'a bit jerky'. A particular difficulty for Ryan was finding it 'hard to fire the gun'. Nevertheless, a 'good plot' and 'good atmospheric sound' won the day and Ryan concluded that he would definitely enjoy playing the game in full.



Tony Wyers

(Computer Programmer)

Tony is no stranger to PCs since he spends his days creating banking packages with the Clipper database system. In his leisure hours, he plays *Championship Manager*, *Civilization*, *Railroad Tycoon*, and the odd flight sim. Although Tony isn't a big adventure fan, his girlfriend plays them, so he is familiar with the popular titles. Tony liked the sound and animation in the game a great deal, but wasn't so impressed with the control system. He did feel that the game was achieving 'something different' and unusually for him, he did feel 'the urge to play more of it'.



Rupert Watters

(Form 3A, City of London School)

Rupert's faves are the *Great Warplanes* series, *Alone In The Dark*, *Wolfenstein*, *Ultima Underworld* and *Elite II*. He found it harder than the first game and, like the others, found the controls 'left a lot to be desired'. 'The graphics are better and Carnby looks harder,' he said. Rupert thought the game hadn't changed much, but that 'having two characters is a good idea'. He'll 'probably buy it'.





(Top) To add to his powers of concentration, Edward practises a spot of Tai Chi. (Above) Down the arcades. (Right) Who's told this gullible gangster that a carpet sweeper is a dangerous weapon?



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 14Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster and compatibles, Ad-Lib

Controls: Keyboard

Comments: 256K EMS needed

PC ZONE score

Scary

97

Price: tba Out: Mid January

Published: Infogrames

Telephone: 071 738 8199

the gambling joint in David Lynch's surreal tv show, *Twin Peaks*. And as *One Eyed Jack* is also an inveterate gambler, surely this is more than just a mere coincidence.

Problem solved

Despite all my glowing praise for *Alone 1*, it did have its faults. It ran slowly and experienced puzzle-solvers felt it was a few puzzles short of the full shilling. Both problems have been eradicated in *Alone 2*. Fine tuning the game engine has made it run up to three times faster, and a substantial increase in size means the gamemap now includes a house, its environs and a pirate's ship. The speed is most notable on *Alone 1*'s most irritating flaw, taking a trip up the apples and pears. Old Edward Carnby (or Emily Hartwood) would do a painfully slow glide up or down stairs, best described as a zimmer-frame shuffle. New Edward Carnby bounds up the stairways in proper, healthy, manly strides.

Even with an increase in size (at one point Infogrames thought the game was becoming so big they were going to split it into two instalments), *Alone 2* has lost none of its prequel's tension. More rooms to explore equates to more dangers to encounter. And at no point do you feel the luxury of space. Each new environment from the maze to the ship is tight and claustrophobic, with dark corners that hide a cornucopia of nasties that will blast away at you at the drop of a hat. The improved speed has also allowed Infogrames' programmers to place more characters on screen simultaneously, so when blindly wandering around a corner you could run into up to five assailants. This has placed a premium on saving life points and bullets as five Tommy-gun toting gangsters cannot be fought off with a rolling pin. The extended gamemap has enabled more complex puzzles to be set as some objects may need to be gathered very early on for use a lot, lot later. Infogrames has also thought out the puzzle-solving element well, and all solutions make perfect sense. All answers are firmly planted under your nose so that when you finally solve the puzzle you feel a complete nonce for not sussing it out earlier.

Pulling faces

Infogrames knew full well that the acclaim garnered by their first creation was largely due to the atmosphere, and the improved game engine has allowed them to bolster the graphics considerably. Faces are more expressive, Carnby has

many more moves and can even get pissed and reel around like an idiot; Grace has a completely different set of actions and villains don't just go up in puff balls anymore when you kill them, but can drop to their knees and keel over, slip over and get stuck in sticky substances. But the biggest atmosphere enhancer is the movement of 2D graphics behind and in front of the three dimensional action. This is rather unusual in a 3D game and the creepy movement of spiders, snakes and rats around you all adds tension to the spooky surroundings.

If you've played *Alone 1*, then I'm preaching to the converted; if you haven't, then I strongly urge you to buy both and play them in order. I'm not saying this because Infogrames is my best mate and sent me a case of brie and Beaujolais before I did this review - the truth is that *Alone 2* is simply the best game in the adventure genre that you can buy. As *PC Zone* was launched after the release of *Alone 1*, we never reviewed it. This has to be a good thing, as if I had rated it back then it would surely have been a classic and had a score of about 93.

Judging by this, the improvements in *Alone 2*, while keeping all of the original's atmosphere and enthralling storyline, means I have to give this one 97. When games are already in this bracket, extra points are much harder to come by, so the problem comes when Infogrames release *Alone In The Dark 3* (in the pipeline for next year and will probably be set in a Wild West ghost town). Don't improve on it too much boys, as we'll have to invent a totally new scoring system.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Alone In The Dark

Alone In The Dark 2

Phantom Of The Opera

Indiana Jones



(Left) Wondrous what a bit of flour can do for that 'ghostly pallor' complexion.

CONSPIRACY

AN INTERACTIVE PC CD-ROM ADVENTURE STARRING DONALD SUTHERLAND



THE KGB OR COMMITTEE FOR STATE SECURITY WAS THE MOST FEARED AND PERVERSIVE INTELLIGENCE GATHERING NETWORK IN THE WORLD.

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THE PLAYER IS CAST AS GRU CAPTAIN MAKSIM RUKOV WHO HAS BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY TRANSFERRED TO DEPARTMENT P OF THE KGB SECOND DIRECTORATE IN MOSCOW.

DEPARTMENT P WAS FOUNDED IN PERESTROIKA'S HEYDAY. ITS FUNCTION WAS TO INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE CASES OF KGB CORRUPTION. AS THE PLAYER SETS OUT TO DISCOVER THE MURDERER OF PRIVATE DETECTIVE GOLITSIN, THE STENCH OF TREACHERY AND DECEIT BECOMES MORE AND MORE OVERPOWERING.

WHO CAN HE TRUST?

HIS DEAD FATHER, DONALD SUTHERLAND IS DIGITISED WITH VIDEO AND SOUND AND PLACED IN CONSPIRACY'S EXTENSIVE HELP SYSTEM FOR USE THROUGHOUT THE GAME.



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Subwar 2050

Laurence Scottford has stood in the middle of the West End at midnight and listened to his publisher doing an extremely loud and embarrassing impersonation of a German U-Boat. Can any other sub simulation be as realistic or as harrowing? Probably not, but here's a review of *Subwar* anyway.



MAGINE, IF YOU will, the world in 57 years time. The Tories are enjoying their 16th consecutive term in office. Most sane, liberal-minded and generally nice people have either become insane or are queuing up at the chemist to buy aspirin tablets in bulk. The whole world is a police state and dissidents are tortured by being made to compete in virtual reality remakes of *The Price Is Right*. As if all that wasn't bad enough, the big multi-national corporations are solving their disputes by blowing each other up in licensed corporate wars.

Does this – the concerned consumer may wonder – mean that crack terrorist squads from Sainsbury's launch surprise attacks on branches of Tesco by lobbing jars of out-of-date pickled herrings through the revolving doors and then making off in motorised getaway trolleys? No, fear not, for the focus of future commerce is the great untamed deep. New underwater developments and territories need protecting, and that's where you come in, mercenary sub pilot extraordinaire.

Riding along on the crest of a wave

If you're expecting action along the lines of *Silent Service 2* or *688 Attack Sub* then think again. We're in the far future and subs have evolved a fair bit. How? Well, for starters,

some of these machines are capable of 120 knots (which is no mean feat at a depth of 2,000 feet or more), and you have windscreens now, so you can see what's going on. Actually they're not real windscreens, but a computer-generated interpretation of what's going on outside your sub – this is a real shame, because, having seen what happens to a large bluebottle when it hits a windscreen at 60 mph, I was curious to see how this would compare with a large tuna fish at 120 knots – still, you can't have everything. These subs are also equipped with enough destructive hardware to give what little marine life remains a serious migraine.

Cat and Mouse

Despite all the serious gear at your disposal, sub warfare in the future is still largely a game of cat and mouse and, although dogfights can and do take place, they should be a last resort. This does make for a game that is not for the impatient. If you're looking for *X-Wing* underwater you'll be disappointed: while *Subwar* is graphically and structurally close, the game plays at a very different pace.

Five training missions in the North Pacific guide you gently into the game (it's only in the last one that you face an opponent that shoots back), then there are four campaigns to play, set in Antarctica, the North Atlantic, the South China Sea and the Sea of Japan. These range

Compare and contrast: on the left is how you'll see *Subwar* if you've got a naff 20MHz 386SX, while on the right is *Subwar* in all its 486 DX2 glory.



STAR TREK: JUDGEMENT RITES

James T Kirk never faltered in battle. With the trusty help of Spock, Scotty, Sulu, Chekov and Uhuru he guided the Enterprise through a barrage of Romulan Warbirds and Elesi Pirate frigates. *Star Trek: Judgement Rites* is a graphic Trekie adventure with you as the mighty cap'n. To help you keep your tight black pants on during the hairier moments of space combat, we've kindly designed a tribble-tastic keyboard overlay so you can photon torpedo your way through the galaxy at warp factor 12.



FUNCTION KEYS ALTER
VIEW DIRECTION

FORE AFT

PORT

STARBOARD

ABOVE

BELOW

TAB
TOGGLE BETWEEN
ON-SCREEN CURSOR
& ON-DECK CURSOR

1

IMPULSE POWER: 1 = STOP > 0 = FULL SPEED

0

W
CHEKOV:
WEAPONS
LP: WALK

E
SCOTTY:
EMERGENCY
POWER

R
KIRK:
CAPTAIN'S
LOG

T
SPOCK:
TALK
LP: TALK

U
LP: USE

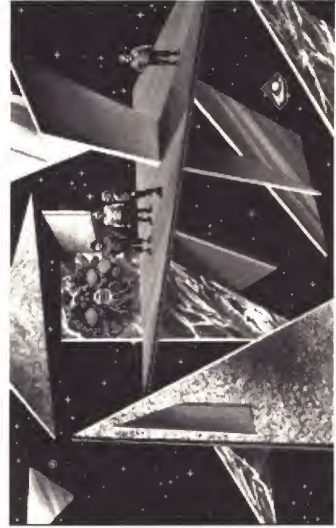
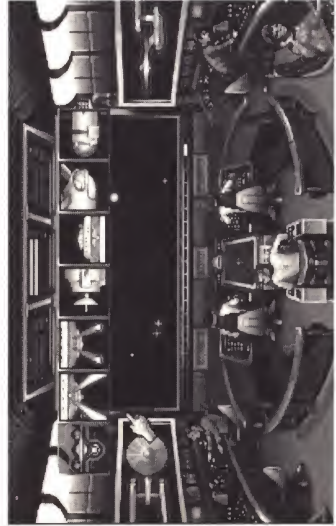
I
KIRK:
OPTIONS MENU
LP: INVENTORY

0
SULU:
ORBIT

LP: DENOTES LANDING PARTY OPTIONS

STAR TREK

This keyboard template has been devised by PC Zone for purchasers of the game *Star Trek: Judgement Rites*, published by Interplay. It is not approved or endorsed in any way by Interplay. All rights recognised.



A
SPOCK:
TARGET
ANALYSIS

S
SULU:
SHIELDS

D
SCOTTY:
DAMAGE
CONTROL

C
SPOCK:
ACCESS
COMPUTER

V
SULU:
FULL
SCREEN

B
KIRK:
TRANSPORT
OFF SHIP

N
CHEKOV:
NAVIGATION

L
CHEKOV:
WEAPONS LOCK
LP: LOOK

< SULU:
DECREASE
SCREEN MAG

> SULU:
INCREASE
SCREEN MAG



The Command Centre

1 New Campaign From here you can enrol in the training missions or any of the four campaigns.

2 Simulated Combat The only place in the game where you have the scope to launch into dogfights without having to worry about the sub in your baffles.

3 Pilot Roster Select your pilot and show off his medals.

4 Mission Briefing Your mission is explained to you in a variety of ways.

5 Configure Subs You can change the formation of the subs assigned to the mission and remove or add armaments.

6 Enter Mission The point of no return; once you're out of those doors, you're committed.



Power Cut!

To give you the flavour of *Subwar's* gameplay, here's a mission taken from the first campaign in which you are required to escort a demolition crew to an enemy power station, clear the way for them to lay explosive charges and then protect them as they do the job and withdraw.



Step One: You head off to the first waypoint. At this stage you're not expecting any trouble, but you keep your sonar passive and your speed low, just to be on the safe side.

Step Two: The lights of the power station appear and you crawl forward to see what's there while the demolition crew hang around at a safe distance. There are two enemy submarines and the place is heavily defended by proximity mines.

Step Three: First, take out the proximity mines. You don't have to hit them dead on, so unguided rockets are perfect for the job. Staying still gives you a minimal sonar signature, so even though the enemy subs are roused by the explosions, they can't find you.



Step Four: Now, with the mines cleared, you can call in the demolition crew to lay the charges and head for home. Remember that they are unarmed, so they are depending on you to cover them.


Step Five: As soon as the enemy subs detect the demolition vehicle they move in to attack it, but this also makes them easy targets for your sonar-guided torpedoes, and a couple of careful shots will either blow the enemy subs out of the water or incapacitate them.

Step Six: The final countdown begins: it's time to throw caution to the winds and head out at full speed so that you are not caught in the blast. At a safe distance, you've time to pause and enjoy the fireworks.

'As long as you have the patience to think each mission through, rather than rushing at things like a bull in a china shop, you'll get plenty of fun out of this game.'

from mildly challenging to downright impossible and since they can be played in any order, you can pitch straight in at the level you want. They are very varied too - you can expect to be assigned anything from rescuing whales to locating the intact wreck of a German U-Boat.

A life on the ocean waves

I can honestly say that *Subwar* is the best thing that MicroProse has produced in a long while. I was uncertain at first, but soon became totally hooked. As long as you have the patience to think each mission through, rather than rushing at things like a bull in a china shop, you'll get plenty of fun out this game. If I have a criticism, it is only that much of *Subwar's* atmosphere comes from its superb graphics, especially the texture-mapped sea bed, but even on a 486 33MHz it chugged a bit too much for my liking. However, if you have a DX2, you're laughing. If you've got a high spec machine and you're into tactical simulations, then do yourself a favour and go out and buy this - you won't be disappointed. 

PC ZONE score

Easily the best
'fun' simulation that
MicroProse has
produced.

88

Price: £44.99 Out: Now
Published: MicroProse
Telephone: 0454 326532

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 1Mb
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 12Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster,
Roland MT-32
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick
Comments: You'll need a 486 running
at 33MHz or better if you want all the
graphic detail on.



BOING! CRASH! SPLAT! EEK! FLUSH! AND THAT NAUSEATING SOUND A CAT MAKES HOARKING UP A HAIRBALL.

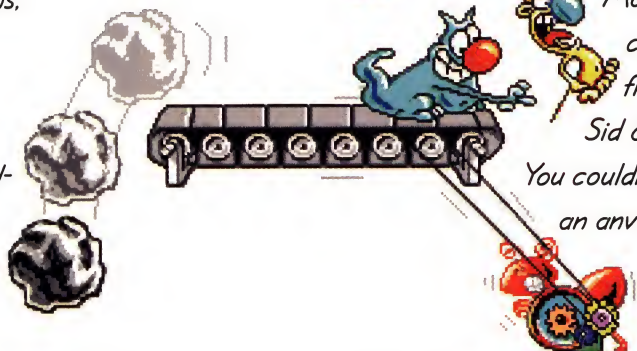
That's Al E. Cat and Sid The Mouse.

A twisted feline and a demented rodent who splat, crash and blast their way through over 80 loony



Rube Goldberg-style puzzles and over 75 mind-bending Toons parts including hair dryers, hat pins, and anvils.

Welcome to Sid and Al's Incredible Toons™. Following in the footsteps of its award-winning predecessor,



The Incredible Machine™, Toons seems harmless enough. But once the boulders start rolling, anvils start falling, and dynamite starts blasting, you know you're in for a sick ride.

With four different levels of difficulty, there's something for everyone. There's even a Home Toons Mode so you can trade your maniacal cartoons with all your deranged friends.

Sid & Al's Incredible Toons. You couldn't have more fun if you dropped an anvil on your own head.

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TFX



Just before reviewing the thing, **Duncan MacDonald** made a quick phone call to Ocean Software: 'What does TFX stand for again?' he asked. 'It stands for Tactical Fighter Experiment,' they replied proudly. 'Er, but surely that would be TFE?' he suggested. They told him to get a life, and hung up.



IT'S VERY POSSIBLE that you may have preconceptions of a game that comes from the stables of Digital Image Design. Remember their earlier games? *F-29 Retaliator* for instance, which was a hoot to play as far as the explosions and arcadiness were

concerned, but which suffered from a rather horrible case of 'suddenly polygons appear out of nowhere-itis'. You'd be flying along and there'd be nothing in front of you. Then, shazam,

an entire city would pop up. And so on. DID designed *Robocop*, too and, to be fair, it was at least a novel approach to a film license.

Unfortunately, it was stronger on imagination than it was on fun. Finally, there was *Epic*. You must remember that one. Just about everybody was looking forward to it because it was to be the first major flight sim-style space-combat game. It turned out to be crap, however, because DID, in their infinite wisdom, decided

that the punters would enjoy having the very small handful of pre-set missions set against a time limit. They also included their trademark of suddenly-appearing-out-of-nowhere polygons. Yaaargh!

So, as I said before, nobody could blame you if you were expecting some sort of disappointment in Digital Image Design's latest venture, i.e. *TFX*. And yes, there are some wobbles. There are some extremely silly ideas implemented - ideas which, had they been left out, would actually have improved the game. But more of these silly ideas later, because as a whole, *TFX* is something of a corker.

Why it's a corker no. 1...

Without using Guru shading, DID have managed to make the scenery look incredibly realistic. The game engine works such that the further away something is from you, the more



Here the cockpit is seen with all the detail intact. When the look around view is selected, the bitmapped version is replaced with a cockpit created from polygons.



(Top left) The look around option enables you to keep ground targets in sight. (Middle left) Flying over the fleet - nice innit? (Bottom left) The clouds in TFX are more like clouds than the clouds in *er* - just about everything else really. (Below) There are no end of top-notch external views, and this static shot just can't do them justice.



'diffused' it is (look at the screenshots). And it works whether something is far away from you in the horizontal plane or far away from you in the vertical plane. The upshot of all this is that *TFX* gives a genuine feeling of 'space', which is second to none (not even to *Tornado*). Play the game for long enough and you'll eventually be able to tell roughly how high you are instinctively, without even looking at the altimeter.

Why It's a corker no. 2...

Falcon 3 started the trend, and it's a good trend. I am, of course, talking about the Padlock View - the view which simulates the turning of a pilot's head, meaning you can keep your eye on the enemy no matter where he is in the sky (or on the ground). *DID* have called their version of the padlock view 'Virtual Flight', and it shites on *Falcon 3*'s original from a great height. It's more akin to the pilot view in *Strike Commander*, really. Using the **SHIFT** and **CURSOR** keys, you can look about wherever you like: up, down, over your shoulder and so on. Alternatively, you can lock the view onto an enemy target and have the simulated head movements controlled by the computer. As if this wasn't enough, you can simply leave the Virtual Flight option to do its own thing, so that when you roll your aircraft to the side and yank back on the stick, the G-effects bob your head about much like they would in real life. With the lights down low and the volume cranked up, you can't beat this for sheer feel - short of donning a virtual reality helmet and strapping yourself into a giant spinny machine, of course.

Why It's a corker no. 3...

The sound, just mentioned vis-à-vis the fact that you want the volume cranked up, is brilliant. *DID* have pulled out all the stops and have included everything from extreme wooshiness for the missiles and boominess for the bombs, to digitised radio messages from other pilots, *AWACS* and so on. *TFX*, essentially, gives you the full audio experience.

Why It's a corker no. 4...

The gameplay - which, I'll admit, I was initially quite dubious about - soon gets under your skin (and I mean that in a nice and loving way rather than nasty, spiteful way). *DID* do love

their pure arcade games, you see, and they want everybody else to love them too. To this end, you're not allowed to get to the really 'big serious bits' of the program until you've ploughed your way through the little bits at the beginning: the Arcade Section for instance, or the Simulator, or the Training. In other words, you have to kill everything in sight, go for points, so that while you're having fun doing all of that you're learning the controls. Once you've finished these earlier sections, you're then given access to Tour Of Duty (i.e. the full ongoing war career with missions, medals etc.), Flashpoints (a selection of 'actually happened in real-life engagements' for you to try your hand at) and finally *UN Commander* (which is where you choose the targets, you set the waypoints and so forth... the whole nine yards).

Why It's a corker no. 5...

There are three planes available to you: one real one and two pretend ones. Okay, so the pretend ones aren't actually 'pretend', but they don't officially 'exist' yet. And we all know what that means, don't we? Yes, it means that they may never get to exist. So let's call them pretend and have done with it, eh? Oh, and if you want to know what the three planes are actually called, and what they're all about, then here goes...

The European Fighter Aircraft (EFA)

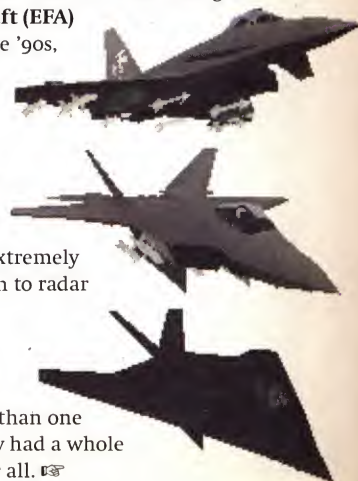
Due to be introduced in the late '90s, the EFA is in the same weight class as the F-16 Falcon. Indeed it's already been dubbed the F-16 Plus.

The Lockheed F-22 Superstar

The F-22 is to be the USAF's largest fighter ever. It has internal weapons bays and is extremely low profile when it comes down to radar signatures.

The Lockheed F-117A Stealth Fighter

Yes, yes, yes, I know you know that this is the real one rather than one of the pretend ones. It's already had a whole MicroProse game to itself, after all. ☹





Why it's a corker no. 6...

The clouds are excellent. Clouds in nearly all other flight sims are two-dimensional horizontal polygons. Flat as pancakes at the end of the day – even when they're stacked on top of one another and sort of 'fade' your view as you fly into them. In *TFX*, however, we are talking the sort of clouds that are seriously woolly; just like sheep. Cloudbase, as you'd expect, is flat. Get to the top, however, and DID's brilliant use of polygon circle thingies and grey shading make for an altogether 'fluffy' experience. It's worth mentioning (while on a purely aesthetic part of the review) that the sun-glare effect is equally stupendous. Aim directly at the sun in *TFX* and the whiteout is so bright it actually makes you squint... and then slowly you start to get a headache... and then – when you're eventually forced to look away because your temples are throbbing so badly – you find there are loads of little white spots jumping around in front of your eyes. And then you begin to feel nauseous. And then you keel over onto your back, and the ambulance has to be called out, and you end up on a ventilator, in a coma. (Well, it's nearly that good, anyway.)

Why it's a corker no 7...

The sheer size of the landscapes is spectacular. If you thought *Falcon 3* had a large playing area, then think again. In *TFX* you get to choose from Eastern Europe (yes, Bosnia et al), North Africa, East Africa, a large chunk of the Atlantic Ocean (with ships and islands) and pretty much the whole of Central America. And the very, very brilliant thing is that all rivers, roads, hills and so on, are accurately mapped. According to DID, if you take out a bridge when playing the game you can be sure that the very same bridge exists in real life and is in the exact same location.

And on and on and on...

The reasons why *TFX* is a corker list could go on indefinitely. But you remember I mentioned that there were some incredibly stupid things implemented? Well let's check out a few now. (1) On the weapons arming screen all you want is a small cursor arrow: point at weapon, drag weapon across to plane. Easy. Was this good enough for DID? Nope. Their cursor is actually a small rotating aeroplane (the EFA). They probably

thought this looked very 'flash'. It actually looks very tacky, and doesn't respond to the mouse movements as well as a simple, plain, little white arrow would. (2) When changing views you get the in-between frames bunged in at no added cost. (Like in the arcade game *Virtua Racing*). It looks neat, admittedly, but if you're in the middle of a dogfight such time-wasting niceties (the transition takes about five seconds) can get you killed. (3) The most annoying thing of all: on the EFA and the F-22, there's a facility whereby the plane's autopilot takes over and pulls you out of dives if it thinks you're getting a bit low. But what if you want to get a bit low, uh? What if your whole raison d'être is to let your load off, inverted, at 33 feet? At first I thought you could turn this 'life saving' effect off, but having ploughed through the documentation and having pressed just about every keyboard combination available, it looks as if you can't. Bummerus extremus – and that's putting it mildly. Still, this major groan and the two smaller moans aside, we do get back to the fact that Digital Image Design have finally come good. *TFX* represents excellent value for money, and will keep you playing for months to come. A final note, though, is that to really get the most from the game you'll need a 486 DX33 or better. Oh, and you're also going to need 4Mb RAM. Tooodle pip! ☺

PC ZONE score

TFX nestles nicely into place alongside the top contenders of the flight sim premier division.

90

Price: £44.99 Out: Now
Published: Ocean
Telephone: 061 832 6633

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 33MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 9Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster and 100% compatibles, Roland LAPC-1 and SCC-1
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

(Top) Oh my god! It's a shadow. I can't believe it – a flight sim with a decent shadow. Oh bliss, oh joy, strap me down now ... aaahhhh! (Middle) Cooeee! Look's nice at night doesn't it? What a shame I've got to go and blow it all away. (Below) Splat! Sorry mate, didn't see you.

IN PERSPECTIVE

Falcon 3.0 is still excellent, but it is getting a trifle long in the tooth if you're honest with yourself. *Tornado* is ultra realistic, which may also make it inaccessible to some. *ATAC* has about the same mix of sim and arcade action to *TFX*, but the game size is considerably smaller.

ATAC

Falcon 3.0

TFX

Tornado



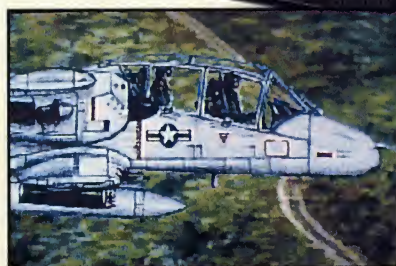
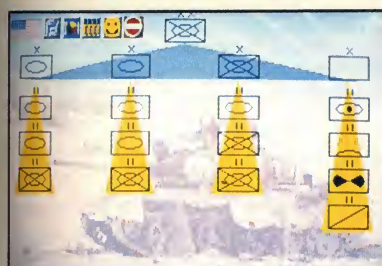
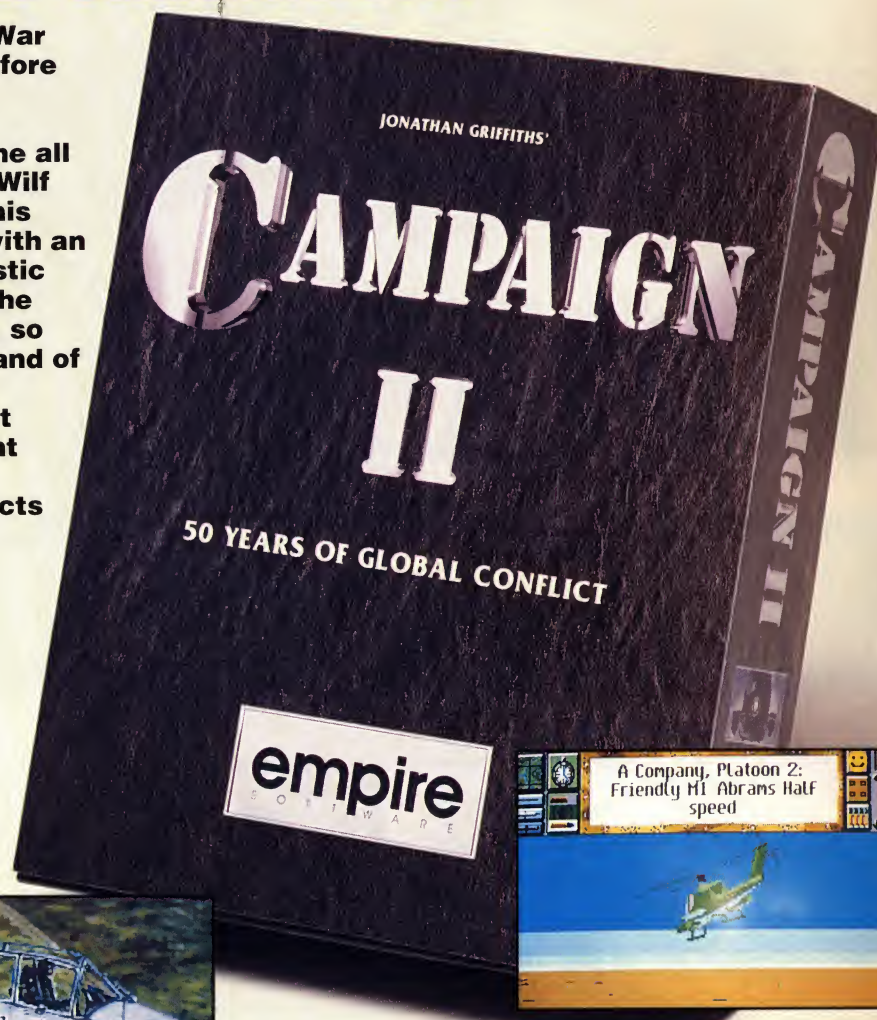
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Campaign II heralds a new generation of War Simulations

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- Campaign II has emerged as the most comprehensive simulation with new improved strategy, at any level in the Chain of Command (C.o.C.), closely resembling that of a real military situation.
- Hands-on action as you fly helicopters in air-to-ground or air-to-air attacks.
- Deploy the animated infantry during fierce battlefield action in a new improved 3D environment.
- Featuring all the modern weapons systems: guided missiles, rockets, homing missiles, laser rangefinders, gun stabilizers and night sights.

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SOFTWARE

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THE MILITARY SIMULATION OF THE YEAR!**

Sam And Max



HIT THE ROAD



Cute but violent, foul-mouthed comic characters who are floundering in the middle of something they

don't fully comprehend? This looks like a job for Patrick McCarthy.



AM AND MAX, our heroes, are Freelance Police. Sam is a large dog, clad in a '30s-style detective suit and owner of a sarcastic line in conversation; Max is a naked rabbit possessed of unbridled enthusiasm, a peculiar sense of humour and a violent streak that seems to be wider than his diminutive body would allow. They are called out to investigate a puzzling disappearance. Bruno, the formerly ice-bound 'World's Frozenest Big Foot' has escaped from his block of ice at the local carnival's freakshow, taking with him the equally strange Trixie the Giraffe-Necked Girl. Where has he gone? And what, if anything, has his disappearance to do with the vertically-challenged country and western star Conroy Bumpus and the disappearance of other Bigfoots all over the country? *Sam And Max Hit The Road* plunges you up to your neck into this beguiling plot which takes you on a journey through the tacky tourist-traps of America. It's the latest in a long line of point-and-click adventures from LucasArts, and anyone who's played one of their other efforts will

find themselves on familiar territory, but with some significant differences to the way the game is played.

SCUMM 2

The main change is the new version of the famous and much-imitated SCUMM, LucasArts' control system. Gone is the box at the foot of the screen with the collection of verbs on one side and the scrollable inventory on the other. Gone, too, are the days of 'Use the velvet bullwhip on the shy fat man': the line where sentences were formed by your actions is also no more.

Instead, you have something similar to that seen most recently in *Innocent Until Caught*. Clicking the right mouse-button cycles through the verb icons and the left mouse button activates them where possible.

The icons are very simple – an eye for Look, a hand for Pick Up, a mouth for Talk To and a hand grasping a very peculiar looking object for Use. Experienced users will be pleased to know the good old Walk still works as a default command and in this case is shown as what looks like a Yellow Pages logo. There's an additional icon, unique to this

'One of the pluses in this game is the central characters. You don't have to go mad and want their babies, but at least they're not totally disagreeable.'





game, which is 'Use Max'. Although you control Sam, and Max is reduced to a secondary tagging-along role, there are situations which may be solved by getting Max more heavily involved.

To help you, the screen still has what LucasArts calls 'hot' areas, showing what you can interact with (something *Innocent* could certainly do with) by altering the cursor. For example, if you can pick something up, the hand turns into a fist. If you can't, it remains open-palmed; if you can examine something, the eyeball opens, if not, it's closed.

Conversations no longer present a choice of sentences to pick from. The new method involves selecting a general line of approach rather than specific sentences by clicking on the variety of boxes that appear at the foot of the screen. The question mark asks questions, the exclamation mark makes statements. You click on the duck to say something humorous or facetious and the hand to end the conversation. Icons appear in the other boxes as applicable to broach other topics.

Wacky funsters

The game's main selling point is the humour, which captures that of the comics very well (although Sam and Max don't spend all their time drinking beer, as they do in the comics). The dialogue is constantly entertaining and the humour is genuinely funny and free of the

American college-kid style in *Tentacle*. These are extracts from a typical conversation:

Fisherman: I try not to listen to country music. When I do, I have an uncontrollable desire to drink lots of beer and do illegal things to farm animals

Max: You too?

Sam: So, how are they biting?

Fisherman: So far they've bitten an arm, two fingers and my nose. If they bite any better, I'll need reconstructive surgery.

The same conversation also fits in references to Sisyphus, Woody Allen and Norman Mailer. That's not to say it's chocka with intellectual stuff at the expense of *Carry On*-style subtlety. For example, Sam says to a rather hulking and threatening-looking carnival worker:

Sam: Whoa, you're a big boy

Carnie: That's why I sit down all the time

The only one I've found too American so far is 'Jackalopes... the bastard pets of Piltown man,' used to describe some items in a fast food outlet. I get it, but it wasn't funny because I'd never heard of Jackalopes before.

SAM AND MAX – THE COMICS

The characters from the game originally appeared as a series of independently-produced comics which were only published at extremely irregular intervals. The sarcastic dog-detective Sam and his savage, sadistic, rabbit chum Max were devised and drawn by artist and writer Steve Purcell. There was much talk earlier in the year that there was going to be a special three-issue series of the comic published by Marvel, of all people, but for some reason it doesn't seem to have come about as yet.

Fans who are already familiar with the comic will no doubt be pleased to know that the feel of the game is very true to that of the original characters.

Anyone whose interest has been piqued by the game might like to know that copies of the originals should still be available in the back-issues section of their nearest decent comic shop.

(Top left) At the freakshow, all life is here: half-man, half-biscuit? No, it's half-man, half-chicken dumpling. (Left) Not what you'd find in a family of four's shopping basket: no wonder the lads try to palm the stuff off on people. (Right) Don't recognise him? He's just your ordinary, sexually-frustrated, mad scientist with a time-bomb in his head.





(Above) The World's Largest Ball of Twine, a complex comprising a museum, a restaurant and a giant moggie's seventh heaven.

Degree of difficulty?

From what I've seen so far, the puzzles are around the *Indy/Monkey 2* level. A couple of things were also more straightforward than I was expecting, but I can't say whether there are any of the *Monkey Island 2* level of obscurantism, since deadlines have limited the hours I've had to play it. The advert for the *Sam And Max Tips Book* in the manual seems to confirm there may well be and also bear out my friend's assertion that they only make these games so hard to make more money from the books.

The game has a good atmosphere, or at least a consistently-realised world, which is more or less the same thing: the well animated and excellent graphics (which can be switched to a suitably retro-looking black and white) are halfway between that of *Day Of The Tentacle* (which looked like the sets of *The Cabinet Of Dr Caligari* made out of Smarties tubes) and *Monkey Island 2*. The spot sound effects suit the slapstick elements well, and the music is great, ranging from '50s cop-show and country and

western to laid-back jazzy sounds that verge on the groovy, which echo the changes in location. All this atmosphere needs RAM of course – in this case, 2Mb of EMS are strongly recommended. It ran acceptably, albeit with occasional delays for hard-disk accessing, on a machine with only 1Mb of EMS, but running it on anything less will undoubtedly be, in the words of Big Ron Atko, 'a bit of a 'mare'.

Character empathy

One of the pluses in this game is the central characters. It has to be said that, for all its charms on the gameplay front, the *Monkey Island* series is hampered by the fact that the lead character is a complete wuss; *Indiana Jones* is just that – Indiana Jones – all right, I suppose, but difficult to really get into. Likewise the main characters in *Day Of The Tentacle* are rather unpleasant American stereotypes and the hero of *Innocent Until Caught* is a bit too much of a 'lad'. It brings about a situation where, although you personally want to win, i.e. complete the game, you may not necessarily want what you stand for to win. It's a bit like having to use Arsenal in a football game, or being lumbered with a role-playing game in which you play out the zany exploits of Kenneth Clarke. The difference between *Sam And Max* and other similar adventure games is that the outlook of the main characters and their brand of humour are a lot more likeable. Well, all right, perhaps likeable is the wrong word. You don't have to go mad and want to have their babies or anything, but at least they're not completely dislikeable. And let's face it, anything with a whack-a-mole (or in this case, whack-a-rat) sub-game in it, one of several included for light relief from the puzzles, has to be worth your money.

I leave you with a conversation between our heroes and the Siamese twins who run the freak-show at the carnival:

Sam: So, where do you buy your clothes?

Twin 1: These aren't clothes.

Twin 2: Our skin is naturally green and vinyl-like.

Max: Good lord – he's buck naked!

Sam: So are you.

Max: Yeah, but I'm cute and marketable. ☹

IN PERSPECTIVE

Day Of The Tentacle

Indiana Jones/Atlantis

Innocent Until Caught

Monkey Island 2

Sam And Max

Simon The Sorcerer

PC ZONE score

Good graphics, good music and adorably acerbic characters. Slots in right at the top of the pile.

92

Price: £42.99 Out: Now
Published: LucasArts/US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640Kb,
2Mb EMS strongly recommended
Min. Processor: 386 recommended
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 15Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA only
Soundcards: All major soundcards
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick



(Top) Light relief with a rodent – wak-a-rat.
(Middle) Not John the Baptist's head, although Max does have Salome-like tendencies.
(Bottom) Mad Max goes joy-riding.

1000 mph and climbing... the twin

16,000lb turbo-thrusts catapult your fighter forward like a deranged rocket-powered roller-coaster.

EVASIVE

ACTION

DUEL FOR THE SKY

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Mindscape International,
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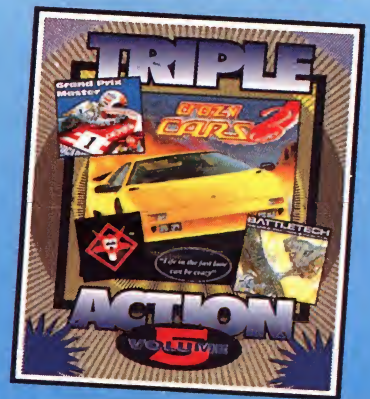
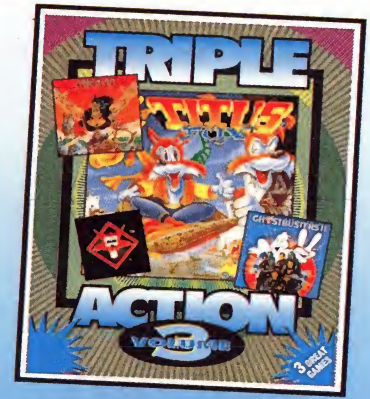
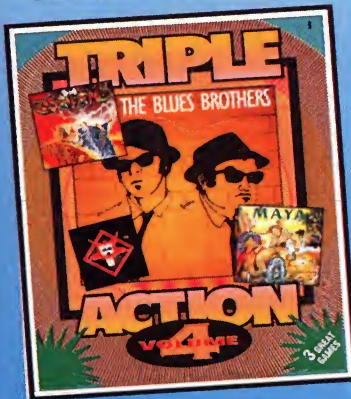
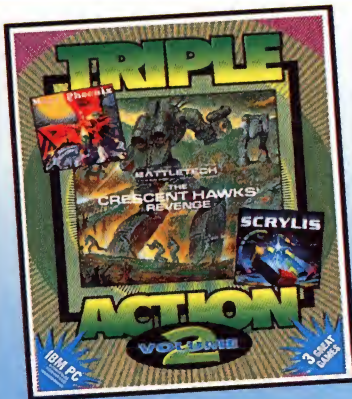


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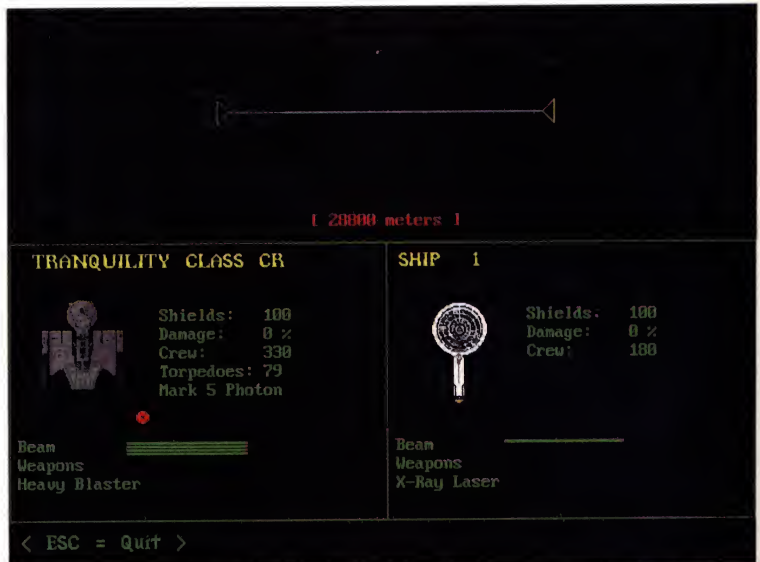


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ACTION**



The position every aspiring trade minister likes to be in... nothing about closing mines, though.



Combat sequence! The two triangles zap each other, and one of them explodes, er... that's it really.

VGA PLANETS

What do you get if you cross a universe of 500 planets, 11 power-hungry nations and Postman Pat? The answer is VGA Planets. Daniel Emery takes his one small step for PC Zone in an attempt to unravel the mystery: 'Is there intelligent life beyond the post box?'



PLANETS IS A MULTI-PLAYER role-playing game i.e. 'You are the leader of a particular race and your aim in life is to keep everybody happy, have a prosperous economy and grab as big a piece of the known universe as you possibly can.

However, there are ten other races out there with the same intentions as you and they are not adverse to a little gun-boat diplomacy either.

Being a multi-player game you need to have all your moves (and everybody else's) collected, analysed etc. and the new situation calculated. This can be done by one of two methods... see the box entitled Two-In-One.

Onto the game

First you have to choose your race. As you might expect, different races have different attributes and, as most people are psychotic, the more vicious races are the more popular; so you have to choose your races and give an order of preference 1, 2, 3 etc.

Once you've been given a race the game starts for real.

Initially you find yourself on your homeworld with a starbase, some ready cash and a rickety old spaceship that leaves a lot to be desired. Now, although this isn't the most powerful of situations to be in, everybody else is in the same boat so the race is on to build as many ships as possible, colonise as many worlds as possible and try to avoid the day-to-day problems that dictators, emperors and God face e.g. civil war, starvation, death, tax etc.

Now, to build starships you need a starbase and to build a starbase you need a freshly-prepared planet, but to get a planet you need a starship (spot a pattern emerging here). So your first task is to fill up your starship with supplies, minerals and colonists and boldly go forth where etc. etc. In other words, you head for the nearest planet and hope that it will yield untold mineral wealth and turn out to be

a utopia; however it's fairly likely to be a rather dull, small insignificant place with nothing of interest (rather like Bradford).

To find out if this is the planet of your dreams you have to conduct a mining survey which will give you a good graphical indication of the abundance of, and ease of access to the minerals in the planet.

Assuming that the planet is worth living on, you've got to get the planet to be economically viable. To do this you have to do three things: build mines to produce mineral wealth; factories to build supplies, and increase defence spending to defend the planet. (Cabinet ministers would be wise to heed these words!)

Once you've got your planet up to scratch you can build a starbase.

One quick burst of construction later...

Okay, now you've got your starbase, the time has come to build some more starships so you can colonise some more planets and so on. Meanwhile, back at your home planet you have been solidly building ships (if you haven't then you will end up in the situation I'm in because I forgot). When you start off you have the blueprints to build the space equivalents of a Boneshaker and a pea-shooter. This is because you have a technical level of one which ranks alongside the East German level of industry.

However, all is not lost because (for a small fee) you can upgrade your technical levels until you get to a technical level of ten which is the same as a Japanese businessman on amphetamines. With each level come bigger and better ships, guns, engines and torpedoes until you get to a very silly size which would put the willies up an LA drug gang, let alone a small planet.

While you've been busy doing this, so has everybody else and eventually (usually well too soon) you run into another player. You now have four options: ☛

PLAY
BY
MAIL

(Below left) The good bit, designing the weapons.
(Below right) Finding paradise is easy, just perform a quick mining survey and Bob's your uncle.



- 1) Engage the enemy in a heroic space battle.
- 2) Carry out a lightning ground assault of his planet and make it your own.
- 3) Send him an offer of friendship and seek an alliance.
- 4) Run and hope they haven't seen you.

Combat in space

If there were any criticisms of this game then this is where they stick their heads up and say, 'Hello!' The game up to this point has generally been a text-driven adventure with some nice graphical stills of planets, ships etc. But after combat there is a scene that is loosely termed a 'video' of the combat scene after the event. This consists of two triangles in circles firing red and white lines at each other while going 'ping ping ping'. You have no control over the events and the rule 'Might is Right' applied 99 percent of the time. This is a shame as it's the only part of the entire game that I found disappointing. Room for improvement here methinks.

Combat on the ground

If you happen to find an opponent's planet with no spaceships around it (or you've blown your way in) then land colonists onto the planet, there will be a fight and somebody wins. That somebody is usually the owner as you have to land a large number of colonists to win as, once again, 'Might is Right', i.e. whoever has the largest number of people usually wins. Still, no harm in trying. This section is purely text-based.

Alliances and messages

This is done via the message panel on the opening screen which shows you if you have any incoming messages and if you want to send one. However, you have to wait until the next turn for a reply.

In brief: *Planets* is a very good RPG with a wide variety of varying challenges to overcome. The arcade graphics are limited, but this is just a minor point in what is otherwise a very enjoyable game. As long as you can stand a ten-day wait between each move (which usually gives you time to think about what you are going to do next days before the return disc hits the door-mat), then this is a game that's worth serious consideration. I'm addicted! ☑

PLAY BY MAIL

TWO-IN-ONE

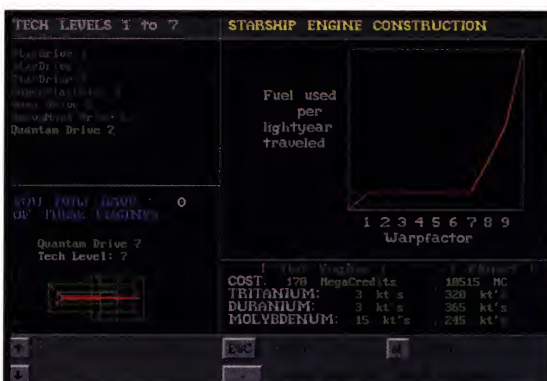
Planets is a multi-player game which can have up to 11 people playing at the same time.

There are two versions of this game: the shareware version that can be played on any PC and is basically a cut-down version of the full game. Everything about it is the same as the full game except you can only progress to a technical level of six, so big *Star Wars*-type spaceships are out of the question. The other version is the full type and this is called 'Play by Mail' because, as the name suggests, it's played by posting your final moves to a central site.

Play by mail is the British version of American multi-player games run via a modem.

The logic of this is as follows: In America local telephone calls are free. This means that running a game via a modem is fairly cheap. However, in the UK you pay through the nose just to phone for a taxi, let alone down-load data, so a much cheaper way is to save all your data onto a disk, fork out your 25p and shove it in the post box.

For more information contact: PAW PBM, 12 Binford Close, Whipton, Exeter EX1 3JZ



PC ZONE score

An interesting type of role-playing game that takes some time, but is generally worth the wait.

70

Price: £24.99 Out: Now
Published: PAW PBM
Telephone: 0392 498022

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 400K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: PC speaker only*
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

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Striker

Another day, another doomed attempt to replicate the beautiful game as a series of coloured dots running about on a big green square, thought **Patrick McCarthy** to himself. More to the point, did Doctor Malcolm really love him? And who were the mysterious masked Siamese twins?



STRIKER FIRST appeared on the Amiga, around about the same time as *Sensible Soccer* (which was rather unfortunate for it). It was very fast, some might even say action-packed (but they may not necessarily hyphenate it). It was also very 'Japanesey' – in other words, the ball stuck to your player's foot like pubic hair to a toothbrush and tended to move around the screen like a beach ball in a force nine gale. Later it appeared on the SNES – a machine almost as bereft of good football games as the PC – where it gained an extra indoor game to go with the full 11-a-side version. Now it has made it onto the PC, having lost the indoor game again.

Some of its original qualities have been faithfully reproduced, though nothing short of a tactical nuclear strike will dislodge the ball from its place

on the end of your player's sticky little boot and you can virtually get the ball to loop the loop with aftertouch. (If you pull back for maximum aftertouch, your player kicks the ball up into the air so abruptly that he collects it again, i.e. he passes to himself.) The game thus tends to be reduced to a series of solo runs from one end of the pitch to the other; after all, why bother passing and risk giving the ball away when you can jig your way past the entire opposing team and produce the kind of shot at the end that defies physics?

Other aspects of the game haven't been quite so faithfully reproduced. Although the game runs at a reasonable rate on a 486, on anything less than a 386 it slows drastically. On a 386sx it's downright slow. If you were going to set the Amiga version to music you'd use the theme tune from *The Beverly Hillbillies*; on a 386sx or below you'd use something by

'The referee prefers to control the game with a Peruvian anal flute rather than the more traditional whistle.'

Game Types

There are several million types of games, (well, four). In assessing them, we gave the game a credibility test by playing tons of tournaments with computer-only teams to see if it knows 'where it's at' (man) when it comes to team skills evaluation.

Our plucky researchers played literally billions of games to bring you, the customer, an accurate report. They sat in a sub-zero room, fingers held with rubber bands over the joystick fire-button, for days at a time. Here is the *PC Zone* joint game type/team ability accuracy evaluations report.

Friendly Game

As you'd expect, you can play one-off friendly games which provide a tension-free environment to get to know your squad, experiment with new ideas and lose 10-0 to the USA.

Super Cup

The Super Cup is essentially a World Cup-type thing. Phase One involves the creation of six groups, comprising four teams each, either by you or by the computer. Any number of teams can be human-controlled. They then play in league format, each team playing each other once.

The 24 teams are reduced to 16 by taking the top two from every group and adding the four third-place teams from groups A, B, E and F. This happens regardless of how many points these teams gained – teams from group F who only got one point still go through, even if a team in group C or D got four or five points.

From then on it's a straight knock-out. We found that England win 70 percent of the time in an all-computer tournament; Japan always gets to the knockout stages; and Scotland always loses to minor South American teams in the opening stage. From this, our researchers have calculated a 66.6 percent Surrealism Factor.

World Knockout

Depending on your attitude to farming subsidies, this may or may not be better than a harvest for the world. You choose how many teams take part. Again, you decide how many human-controlled teams there will be.

Japan were, again, the hot favourites from the twilight zone, notching whopping 6-0 victories against your Ecuadors and your Greeces. To further tax your already heavily-overtaxed credibility nodules, England only failed to win the tournament on two occasions during our tests. The astronomical Hysterical Fantasy Quotient caused two researchers' brains to implode.

World League

Up to 22 teams can play. Teams can play each other up to four times and you can have two or three points for a win.

In an extensive series of test leagues, when averaging out results we see the might of the German football machine coming out joint tops, matching England with an average goal difference of over 105 for a 30-game season. Italy, sadly, were grossly underrated. The Japanese team's league failure proves the old adage that anything can happen in the cup, but it's the long hard slog of the league that finds you out.

Leonard Cohen. (Talking of music, it has a theme tune seemingly written by the *Match Of The Day* man after a heavy acid session. It sounds suspiciously like the type of thing torturers pipe into political prisoners' cells.)

The in-game sound is truly pathetic. I know it's coming through the soundcard, because I've put my head against the speakers, but I still can't believe it. The crowd noise is a quick blast of white noise; a foul produces the same noise as a shot hitting the bar – rather like someone headbutting a sheet of aluminium foil – and the referee seems to prefer to control the game with a Peruvian anal flute rather than the more traditional whistle.

What really does it for this game, though, is the graphics – in particular the pitch, and in particular on a slow machine. The players are quite detailed, well animated and they just about hold up on a fast machine, but on a slow one they're terribly slow. Unfortunately, the pitch doesn't realise this and tries to whizz about without the players. The surface of the pitch is indicated by a series of translucent '70s disco-stripes similar to the type used to indicate forward motion in cheap driving games and which vibrate sickeningly as they scroll. It's not so noticeable when the game moves fast, but on a slow machine it's like being repeatedly stabbed in the cornea.

Another graphical oddity is the sudden introduction of perspective at one end of the pitch. At least, I assume that's what it is; the goal is much smaller at the top end. Unfortunately players aren't



PC ZONE score

Another Paul Bodin penalty of the gamesplaying world.

55

Price: £29.99 Out Now
Published: Rage
Telephone: 051 933 2688

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 10MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Sound Cards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick

Player Ratings

In friendly games you can decide whether to use individual player abilities or have everyone perform to the same level. In truth, you don't really notice the difference between players that much anyway, except with aftertouch and speed. For the record, attributes that can be toggled are kick power, aftertouch, ball control, tackling speed, heading power, stamina and player speed.

ENGLAND		ITALY	
GOALS	0	GOALS	1
SHOTS ON TARGET	1	SHOTS ON TARGET	15
POSSESSION	20	POSSESSION	60
CONSECUTIVE PASSES	3	CONSECUTIVE PASSES	2
PENALTIES	0	PENALTIES	1
CORNERS	0	CORNERS	1
FREE KICKS	0	FREE KICKS	0
FOULS	1	FOULS	5
BOOKINGS	0	BOOKINGS	0
RED CARDS	0	RED CARDS	0
SUBSTITUTIONS	0	SUBSTITUTIONS	0

A highly unrealistic view of a game between England and Italy. There's no way England would get a shot on target.

scaled accordingly, so the goal is smaller and the goalkeeper's head scrapes against the crossbar and the goal is correspondingly harder to score into.

It doesn't sound too good, does it? The thing is, it's quite playable on a fast machine and a little more care could have produced a reasonable game. It's a shame they've mucked up the pitch graphics and the speed so badly, because it could have been an alternative to *Sensible* if they'd got it right. The problems aren't so marked on a fast machine, but the packaging claims it's playable on a 286. It is, but even at maximum speed settings it's still in slow-motion. The in-game options are all there, the different ways to play are there too. The team-editing facility minimises the lack of club teams and means you can make your own up and have fun with stupid leagues or whatever. Unfortunately, the pitch scrolling is a visual assault and the gameplay is seriously flawed. ☹

ENGLAND		FAT GEORGIE		FORMATION	
1	HELMET HEAD	1	GOAL SPEED	4-2-4	
2	NOBCHIESE	2	BALL CONTROL	1-4-3-2	
3	PERACE	3	SHOOTING POWER	1-3-3	
4	BOARDS	4	STAMINA	2-3-5	
5	WALHER	5	AGGRESSION	3-5-2	
6	FAT GEORGIE	6	DEFENSIVE PLAY	5-4-1	
7	PAWHER	7	STRENGTH		
8	PLATT	8	BALL CURL		
9	SHERBER	9	SHOOTING ABILITY		
10	DALEY	10	AERIAL ABILITY		
11	FEROTARRA				
12	WINGTOS				
13	WATGHT				
14	STAYTON				
15	BATTY				
16	SEERHAN				

Teams

The dodgy typeface used for team names leads to some peculiar teams appearing. Who are the mysterious Srudi Aaabir? And what are we to make of Peau? There are 64 national teams available – everyone from the giants of world football, (Germany, Brazil etc.) to the dwarves (Faroe Islands/England etc.). The heroic San Marino are nowhere to be seen.

Teams can be edited to high heaven, given odd names and have players named after parts of the anatomy. There's lots of scope for budding Moschinos to devise team strips of colossal poor taste.

The tactical options include both formation and strategy. Formations range from the bog-standard 4-4-2 to the outlandishly '20s 2-3-5. Strategies include Breakaway, Attack, Cautious etc.



U.S. GOLD!

PART 2

WIN! A WEEK'S SKIING HOLIDAY

IN THE FRENCH ALPS

Your second chance to enter our Winter Olympics '94 competition, in which US Gold and PC Zone are celebrating the release of the official game of the 1994 Winter Olympics by offering a reader and companion a week's, all expenses paid skiing holiday in the French Alps.



You



Your somewhat
less talented
'companion'

T

HE HOLIDAY MUST be taken in January 1995. It is for two people at the ski resort on Mont Genevre, just on the French side of the Alpine French/Italian border. Mont Genevre has an excellent record for snow, so conditions should be perfect. The winner and a companion will be flown from Heathrow to Turin where they will be transferred to their hotel. The hotel provides half-board accommodation with an en suite bathroom and is only 100 metres from the ski lift. We will arrange a ski pass for each person, plus equipment and boot hire, free lessons and insurance.

Don't forget to look out for US Gold's official game of the Winter Olympics, which is available now. We'll be carrying a full-review soon.

If you missed Part 1...

This is part two of the competition - if you've missed part one, you can either order a back copy of issue ten or see part five of the rules below on how to obtain a free entry. Once again, you should complete the coupon in this issue, but don't send it to us until you've completed the final part of the competition which will appear in issue 12.

The Questions

HINT: Look for a phonetic theme!

- 1 The Russian dramatist and inventor of 'method acting' was:
a) Chekov; b) Tolstoy;
c) Stanislavski
- 2 The standard character set for microcomputers is:
a) EBDIC; b) ASCII; c) BASIC
- 3 The man who had a hit with *Killer* is:
a) Adamski; b) Adam Faith;
c) Adam Ant

RULES

1. Employees of Dennis Publishing or US Gold caught entering this competition will be told to piste off.
2. Incomplete entries, (i.e. those with one or more parts missing) will be given the cold shoulder.
3. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
4. At least one of the two people taking the holiday must be aged 18 or above.
5. A free entry form for this competition can be obtained by sending a stamped S.A.E. to Winter Olympics Part One Free Entry, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ.

WINTER OLYMPICS COUPON PART 2

Answers (write the letter):

1

2

3

Name:

Telephone:

Important: Do not send the coupon yet.

You will need to complete part three of the competition in the March issue. The final part of the competition will carry instructions on how to present your completed entry to us.

TORNADO

Imagine the thrill...



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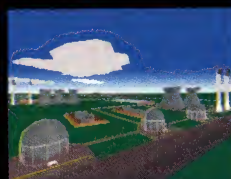
200 ft. 600 kts. You lead a formation of six Tornados deep into enemy territory. Terrain following system on. Mission planned to the last detail. Split second timing for a synchronised attack with pin-point accuracy.

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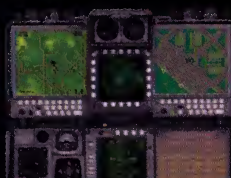
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Pilot's cockpit



Stunning detail



Navigator's cockpit



Sophisticated mission planning



Awesome missions

IBM PC - £44.99

Amiga - £34.99

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PC Screen Shots



GAME STATUS The players, elapsed time and last two moves.

CHESS CLOCKS Toggle between different styles of analogue clock.

MOVE LIST List of all moves played so far. The video-type controls are used to play through the game.

The screenshot shows the Chessmaster 4000 Turbo interface. At the top is a menu bar with options: GAME, PLAY, ACTIONS, MENTOR, LOOK/FEEL, WINDOWS, LAYOUT, and HELP. The main interface is divided into several panels:

- Chessboard:** A standard 8x8 chessboard with pieces. The files are labeled a-h and ranks 1-8.
- STATUS:** Displays the current player (Lasker), time (00:00:00), and the last two moves (12: 0-0, 13: e7xf6). It also shows the opponent (Pillsbury) and their time (00:00:00), along with moves 13: g5xf6 and 14: h4-h5.
- CLOCKS:** Two analogue clock faces.
- MOVE LIST:** A list of moves played so far, with video-type controls (play, stop, back, forward) at the top. The moves listed are: 2. c2-c4, 3. b1-c3, 4. g1-f3, 5. c1-g5, 6. d1xd4, 7. d4-h4, 8. 0-0-0, 9. e2-e3, 10. c1-b1, 11. c4xd5, 12. f3-d4, 13. g5xf6, 14. h4-h5, e7-e6, g8-f6, c7-c5, c5xd4, b8-c6, f8-e7, d8-a5, c8-d7, h7-h6, e6xd5, 0-0, e7xf6, and c6xd4.
- LEGAL:** A list of legal moves for the current position, including a8-b8, a8-c8, a8-d8, a8-e8, f8-e8, f8-d8, f8-c8, f8-b8, g8-h8, g8-h7, a7-a6, b7-b6, b7-b5, d7-e8, d7-e6, d7-f5+, d7-g4, d7-h3, d7-c8, g7-g6, and g7-g5.
- CAPTURED:** A panel showing captured pieces.
- THINKING:** A panel showing the best line seen so far, depth (0), score (0.00), previous and current lines searched, and positions seen (0).
- ANNOTATION:** A panel showing a comment: "Aiming at a Kingside attack with f2-f4 and g2-g4, but the Queen would be better posted for defensive purposes".

Annotations with red arrows point to specific features:

- THINK LINES:** Points to the "Best:" section of the THINKING panel.
- CAPTURED PIECES:** Points to the CAPTURED panel.
- Annotation:** Points to the ANNOTATION panel.

At the bottom left, there is a button labeled "Display Annotation Window".

Chessmaster

Mark Burgess gives *Chessmaster 4000 Turbo* the 1,000 endgame test. Nice bodywork but what about the engine?



THE CHESSMASTER series has a long history and a reputation for friendliness to beginners. The latest is *Chessmaster 4000 Turbo* which differs from *Chessmaster 3000* in that there are more opponents, easier controls and a better chess engine.

The *Chessmaster* series has set great store by its graphic front end. This version is no exception: you can configure the screen any way you want and save configurations to disk. The Windows are easy to paste and re-size. There are also eight supplied configurations:

from the frankly useless insect set to a classic Staunton set in red and white. Although you can alter the colour of the board, you can't change the colour of the pieces. The other weak point is the 2D display, which most serious players will want to use. It's dreadful - worse than those of 'brute force' programs like *Sargon*.

These are strange oversights given the work that has gone into the rest of the graphics - graphics, I might add, that will slow the program down on any PC without 8Mb and a Windows accelerator.

As in *Chessmaster 3000*, you can play against a large range of opponents. Some of these are generic

LEGAL MOVES This displays all legal moves.

THINKING The horizontal gauge shows the current score; the meter shows potential advantage; the right-hand gauge shows the depth of the search by the computer and the counter shows the number of moves the computer is searching.



Plain and Simple: a large 2D board with status and captured pieces windows.

Table Top Chess: large 3D board with clocks and captured pieces windows.

Personal Guide: 2D board with natural language advice.

Micro Chess: a tiny 2D board.

New Perspective: a weird surreal landscape board.

Far East: large marble 3D board with Chinese set.

Think Tank: 2D board, think lines, thinking and captured pieces.

War Room: 2D board with status, captured pieces, think lines, move list, legal moves and clocks.

The board can be any one of 11 styles and you can rotate and tilt it to your taste. There are 11 sets to choose from (four in 16-colour), ranging

(pawngripper, woodpusher), others play in the style of a particular master like Alekhine, Fischer, Kasparov, Karpov, Nimzovich and Tal. This means, I assume, that the program gives preference to book openings from those particular masters. Certainly, there is not really a great deal of difference in the middle game.

Nor are they as strong as their human counterparts; I managed to beat Kasparov, which I think is improbable in real life. You can tailor your own opponents with aggressiveness, book depth, contempt for draw, control of centre, king safety, material vs position and so forth. You can create an opponent (as I know Mr Cursor has done) who values pawns higher than the queen.

ANNOTATION Comments on the moves made; the computer can do it or you can type them in yourself.

PC ZONE score

Tough opponent; gentle teacher.

90

Price: £34.99 Out: Now
Published: Mindscape
Telephone: 0444 246333

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
Minimum Processor: 386SX
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 12Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA with 256k video RAM
Soundcards: Anything Windows will drive
Controls: Mouse
Comments: Windows version 3.1 and DOS version 5.0 or higher. Video accelerator recommended for 256 colour mode. Needs 4Mb swapfile if less than 8Mb RAM on board

4000 Turbo



The computer opponents can be set up to play each other – I arranged a Karpov/Kasparov game which lasted seven minutes at ten seconds per move (Kasparov won).

Tutorial

Always a strength of the Chessmaster series, Chessmaster 4000 Turbo takes its teaching role seriously. The 'mentor' options will take you from complete hand-holding to expert adviser. 'Teaching' will highlight threatened, pinned and skewered pieces, isolated pawns, promotion threats and control of the board. 'Tutorial' covers chess basics, strategy and moves.

From the 'Mentor' menu Chessmaster 4000 Turbo lets you practise a wide variety of openings – nine variations of the Caro-Kann defence alone. You will be prompted for each move and faced with the sort

of reply to expect. Ideal if you're not quite sure how the two knights variation goes (1E4 C6 2NC3 D5 3NF3).

During any

game, you can call up the normal hint feature and a special help function called 'natural language advice'. This made its first appearance in Chessmaster 3000. Set the computer's thinking time and it will produce a clear and concise evaluation of the game and your situation. The number of moves to which it looks ahead is truly intimidating, and it is just as well that you can print out the advice for later reference. The advice is not so useful when playing weak opponents

(because you will be reacting to threats that they are too incompetent to see).

Another remarkable feature is auto-annotation. To use this you have to take back the move or moves you want annotated, then open the move list and annotation windows. The annotated move list can be exported as an ASCII file. It's a shame this process couldn't be made a bit more user-friendly. An analyse move list works in the same way.

Notation can be co-ordinate, descriptive, international and long or short algebraic. Games can be exported as ASCII move list, ASCII board or Forsythe notation (see the box for an example). The import game feature in Chessmaster 3000 was an absolute pain and used an idiosyncratic format. Chessmaster 4000 has remedied the situation somewhat, but reading in games from ChessBase (probably the most widely used package) is still difficult and the library building option needs some more attention.

Engine

So it looks good and is an excellent teacher. But has it got what it takes to satisfy the serious player? The short answer is, yes – it's a strong player. Chessmaster 4000 Turbo uses a 32-bit rasc engine which beats Chessmaster 3000's Kittinger engine nearly every time.

What about Kasparov's Gambit and its much-vaunted Socrates engine? Well Kasparov's Gambit implements Socrates – which is a 32-bit program – as 16-bit; so it doesn't run well and loses many of its advantages. Chessmaster 4000 Turbo will beat Kasparov's Gambit in nine games out of ten. It also wins most of its games against fierce programs like Sargon V and Zarkov 2.6. The engine is, in fact, based on that used by Zarkov 2.5.

A bonus is the Opening Book Editor. This only runs in 256 colour and is undocumented, so not a feature for the unwary. You can alter which openings Chessmaster favours and if you're taken with someone's new variation, add it to the library.

To sum up, this is a worthy successor in the Chessmaster series. The only doubt I have is, oddly enough, the much-vaunted graphics. They are good (with the exception of the 2D board) but they make great demands on your machine. Only the Windows version is available at the moment, with the DOS version coming in June 1994. ☐



Modern set in surreal landscape. Black is checkmated.



Far Eastern set-up: Philidor proves his theory that 'Pawns are the soul of chess'.



Natural Language tutorial.



Opening book editor.

IN PERSPECTIVE

A stronger player than Kasparov's Gambit, and more useful for the beginner. Some players will be unhappy with the file importation and the 2D display.

Chessmaster 3000

Chessmaster 4000

Kasparov's Gambit

Sargon

[illegible]

**YOU CAN STILL
GET EVEN.**

A white Gravis PC GamePad is shown at an angle. A silver pen is positioned above the left joystick, with a trail of red dots indicating its movement. The device features a blue joystick on the left and four colored buttons (red, blue, yellow, green) on the right. The text "GRAVIS PC GamePad" is printed on the top right of the device.

Advanced GRAVIS

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The Terminator

THE TERMINATOR: RAMPAGE
 SCORE: 100
 ARMO: 275
 SHEL: 150
 SEAT: 0
 COMC: 0
 RICH: 0



Bethesda just will not give up. Yet another *Terminator* game has arrived. We gave it to the most patient man in the office, Patrick McCarthy.

THIS IS THE follow-up to *Terminator 2029*, itself only released a few months ago. In it, you played a member of the human Resistance still battling it out with robots from Skynet. In order to achieve a little 'RPG factor,' it attempted to combine the 3D shoot 'em-up with a continuing series of missions which culminated in the destruction of the Skynet Orbital Platform. It had several faults, the most obvious of which was that you were restricted to moving about one square at a time like a *Wizardry* throwback, while your targets were tearing about in full animation. As a result, it didn't exactly take the world by storm.

Convinced that all the game really needed was one or two slight alterations to the playing style, game content, control method, plot, graphics and sound, they've made a follow-up which dispenses with all the unwanted baggage and concentrates on the shoot 'em-up elements. The plot to justify the game's existence is another one of those unutterably confusing jobs that exploits the fact that everyone gets confused by time travel and will drop their workable plasticine models of the space-time continuum in exasperation after the first paragraph. You know what it's like. As soon as we see anything to do with complicated theories of time travel our eyes go all out of focus and we're sick into a bucket. Here goes, though.

The plot

The Skynet Orbital Platform was destroyed at the end of the last game (I expect someone from Bethesda had to do it themselves, because nobody I know got anything like that far). Except it wasn't really. When the Orbital Platform was destroyed, it dumped a T-800 into the past, equipped with all the core data on events to date. (Kind of like a self-help book for budding computers, called *How To Develop Self Awareness, Grow Arms And Legs And Wipe Out Those Soft Pudgy Bastards With Unsightly Body Hair*.) This adapted T-800, known as a Meta-Node, infiltrated the headquarters of the Cyberdyne Systems Laboratory, downloaded all the info from the future, including how Skynet had been destroyed the first time, and started the whole

Rampage



shebang all over again, only sooner. Back in the future, everyone started disappearing as this new turn of events affected the past.

Luckily, (I'm paraphrasing here for the sake of my own sanity as well as yours) there were some techie bods working in 'null time' zones who realised what had happened and decided to dump you back there to destroy the Meta-Node. Luckily for Bethesda (or there wouldn't have been a game) the techie bods cocked up, and you arrive after the Meta-Node has started, but not completed, its evil work. (I don't know why they don't do the job properly and just send you back a little further to shoot Charles Babbage.)

The precept

Fortunately the ACE battle armour from the first game is still hidden somewhere nearby, and you have to fight your way through 32 levels of office buildings - 24 original levels, plus eight that the Meta-Node has built to protect the core data. There are weapons and power-ups to collect, things to track and shoot you, and walls to creep about behind. You've got it: *Wolfenstein 3D* with fancy graphics.

The gameplan

What you have to do - apart from shooting everything that moves - is find stuff in the past that can be combined to form an approximation of the thing in the future that can destroy the thing from the future that's in the past. That is, you have to make a V-Tec, which stands for Very Big Gun, and blow up the Meta-Node. At the start of each level you're told how many pieces there are to find, and away you go, with a song in your heart and a strange humming in your head.

The sound

It's the music, taken from the film, that you can hear. And when you shoot something, you hear that too. Both sound pretty good and you can alter the volume of each independently. What more needs saying?

The graphics

Each level takes place on a different floor of the building. The background graphics are good up to a point; the point being that the stuff dotted around to give the effect of an office building is all completely flat. Desks face you straight on, no matter where you're standing in a room, basins in washrooms are clearly painted onto the wall, and so on. You can walk right through chairs and

lamps. Searching among them for bullets and stuff adds up to more of an annoyance than an environmental enhancement.

The walls, floor and ceiling are all texture-mapped. You can toggle these effects in a variety of ways: the floor and ceiling can be switched off individually; the 'lights' (which affect the flare from gunfire rather than the ceiling striplight effects) can be toggled, and the graphical detail can be set at a number of levels. You'd think that this would make the game playable on just about any machine.

The problem

It isn't. On a 486/33, with all the details on, it's disappointingly jerky. Using the sprint button down a corridor is like undergoing a series of fainting fits, and turning round (rather important in a game in which things creep up on you all the time) is like steering the Amoco Cadiz. We had to play with the details on their lowest setting and with either the floor or ceiling turned off in order to get a reasonable speed out of it - so any machine

slower than this could be struggling somewhat.

The other problem

Each level of the building is big, and seems to have been designed by the man who did

the labyrinth in *The Name Of The Rose*, only this time he was drunk. Since you have to search every single room (because it could well be the one with a V-Tec piece in it) it's very slow-going. You can only ever see a small part of the floor plan in the map provided, and it's very easy to lose track of where you are and what you've visited, especially in the middle of a fight. It's badly in need of some indication of whether you've already checked a room or not, and since you can't store up certain items and therefore have to go back for them, a way of noting the room's contents would also help.

The other other problem

The other, worse, problem is the imminent release of *Doom*, the follow-up to *Wolfenstein*. *Rampage* is trying to do what *Doom* does, and in direct comparisons between the two, *Rampage* comes off the worse for wear. The levels we've seen of *Doom* are fast and incredibly addictive and nothing gets in the way of the game. *Rampage* is slow by comparison and becomes tedious fairly quickly. The whole point of any 3D shoot 'em-up is speed, except this doesn't have much speed, either running speed or in style of gameplay. ☹

PC ZONE score

Okay, but once you've seen *Doom*, you'll laugh in *Rampage's* face and spill its pint.

75

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Bethesda/US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb (2Mb EMS)
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 25MHz
(486/33MHz strongly recommended)
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 18Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA only
Soundcards: Aria, Ensoniq, Roland, Sound Blaster/Pro, Ultrasound
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

(Top) Don't be fooled by the Target ID - he's facing you and he's got a gun.

(Left) Don't get excited. You can't shoot him until he appears in the Target ID box.

(Right) Poot.

(Bottom left) Shoot the computer, shoot the computer! Smash the machines, fellow Luddites! Smash the... (Alright, alright. Ed.)

(Bottom right) Shoot the tea-urn, shoot the tea-urn! Smash the... (You've already done that one. Ed.)



Goblins 3

When the action called for a journalist-cum-werewolf, we didn't need to look far for a suitable reviewer: **Rob Tribe** was already baying for the chance to play *Goblins 3*.

THIS IS THE third cartoon puzzle-game featuring Coktel's mad-cap goblins. In it they must find their way out of a series of screens by making use of available objects in typical graphic adventure fashion.

While *Goblins* had three of the little sods, and *Goblins 2* had just two of them, *Goblins 3*, you will not be surprised to learn, has just the one. He is Blount, a journalist who sets out to interview two rival royals. Unfortunately, things don't go quite according to plan and Blount gets caught up in a mystery, soon facing several challenging problems, not the least of which is that he has become a werewolf and assumes a canine form at each full moon.

Although he has no goblin companions, Blount is not left to do all the puzzling alone. Throughout his journey, he makes all sorts of friends from Chump, a somewhat ebullient parrot, to Bizoo, a small flea frozen into a glacier. Completion of many of the puzzles requires close co-operation with these comrades, although they often simply provide comic relief. Take Ooya the magician, for instance, who amuses himself by making sheep appear from thin air.

'An improved interface, larger locations and slightly more logical problems.'

For the first couple of levels the gameplay is confined to single screens, as was the case in the first two games, but you are soon thrust into the world of multi-screen puzzle-solving. Unlike many other adventure games, it is pretty obvious when you get part of the puzzle right, so you won't be left wondering whether putting the axe in the cooking pot was entirely the right thing to do.

A new feature is that your objective for each puzzle can be called up at any time. When this fails to get the old grey matter working, at least you have five jokers to play. A joker doesn't give you subtle hints on how to complete a screen, it tells you exactly how to do it from beginning to end. A word of warning - you only have five jokers for the whole game, so don't give up until your brain has fallen out of your head.

The graphics and bouncy soundtrack are pretty identical to the previous two games, although *Goblins 3* has more additional animation and cut scenes, which are amusing at first but can tend to get a bit tedious after you've seen them for the tenth time. An improved interface, larger locations and slightly more logical problems make for less frustration and ensure that *Goblins 3* is easily the best of the *Goblins* games. **Z**

PC ZONE
score

Good for beginners and a pleasant diversion for seasoned adventurers.

75

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Coktel Vision/Sierra
On-Line Telephone: 0734 303322

PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 8Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA 256 Colour
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum, Ad-Lib
Controls: Microsoft compatible mouse



Blount tries to figure out how to get out of the stone nostril before turning into a werebeagle.

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 - (c) Bukhara
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 - (b) Brighton
 - (c) Stoke-on-Trent
- 3) What is the definition of a 'rally'?
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 - (b) An Elizabethan explorer and courtier
 - (c) An 18-speed bike

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GLOBAL DOMINATION

Chris Anderson puts on his megalomania slippers and transmogrifies into Napoleon – accent, chickens and all – in order to pit himself against his PC in *Global Domination*, the latest in strategy games from Impressions.



GLOBAL DOMINATION is Risk in fancy dress. You begin the game with a handful of territories scattered around the world and battle with up to four other would-be megalomaniacs for total supremacy. Before you start you choose your computer opponents from a choice of nine great leaders from the past, all chosen because of the variety of strategies they represent. That said, I am not entirely convinced that General Custer or Queen Victoria would present much of a threat on the battlefield. It adds variety, if nothing else.

Honestly Guv, 'e was asking for it

The game is played in turns, with each player making his moves for the current month. The icon bar at the right of the screen provides access to most of the game's features. From here you can pop up the world map to check out where your opponents are holed up and what territories they own and decide which of the neutral territories would be the most lucrative to occupy.

A click on the geography icon displays all the cities in the world, colour-coded for size so you can see the big ones nice and clear, and form your plan of attack accordingly. The idea is to target an area with lots of medium and large-sized cities around it and start moving your troops in as soon as possible. Capturing as many territories as you can at the start of the game is of paramount importance but before you can do this you need transport to move your troops around the map, so once you've identified your target area, it's straight on to the logistics screen to have a look at the money situation.

The logistics screen displays your financial and armament resources and how many moves you can make during your turn. At the start of the game you only have one land

movement which means you can only grab one territory, therefore it's vital you sort this out as soon as possible by increasing the amount of resources available to transport, the changes coming into effect for your next turn.

This screen is also used to build your armies. All the standard military units are available, from infantry units, both ground and mobile, to tanks, artillery units and defence and attack aircraft. There isn't much point in getting an army of any significant size together at the beginning, as everyone is too busy running around the place seizing as many countries as possible to even think about getting into a scrap. You're better off putting as much money into transport as you can, and building single infantry units to jump into neighbouring territories.

Each player is allocated a colour and as the game progresses and territories are invaded, the countries on the world map change colour correspondingly to indicate the player who has invaded them. Zooming in on the territory map shows the countries in that region, who owns them and whether they have any armies in the vicinity. In the game's early stages, any armies you encounter are unlikely to have you shaking in your boots. They will most likely consist of a single infantry unit and a heavy artillery unit, so if you spot a particularly lucrative capital with an enemy army in it, just send in a couple of heavy duty tanks and you'll boot them out in a flash.

Sooner or later, after you've been jumping into everybody's territories willy nilly, someone's bound to get pissed off. When this happens, that country will turn orange on the world map to show it's in conflict and a battle commences. Whether you fight the battle yourself or not depends on what options you selected at the beginning of the game.

Kick 'em in the goolies

Apart from having five difficulty levels, from beginner to expert, the game also has three levels of complexity. At simple complexity, you fight by building and moving armies from one place to another on the world map. At reduced complexity, you can also use diplomacy to make allies, use an intelligence bureau for spying, and assemble special forces to perform covert operations in anyone's territories. There's no point in wasting resources on spying and stuff when they would be better spent on creating the biggest kick-ass army on the globe.

At full complexity, battles take more than one turn to resolve giving you the option to retreat from a losing fight and you can also choose to fight a satellite battle. This is the 'action' part of the game.

When you enter into conflict with one of your opponents over a particular territory, you can access the Military screen and elect to fight the battle



IN PERSPECTIVE

Steel Empire is another Risk-based strategy game with arcade battle sequences, except it's infinitely better than *Global Domination*. *Dune 2* offers frantic, real-time action and plenty of it and *Syndicate* is more polished and has lots of blood but, like *Global Domination*, suffers from a lack of a long-term challenge.

Dune 2

Global Domination

Steel Empire

Syndicate

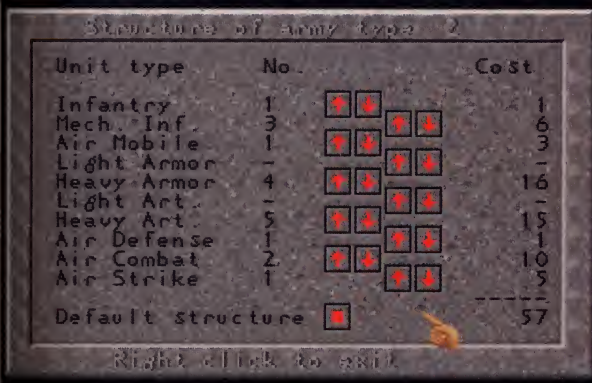
The Battle For Russia



1 The World Map and things are looking good for Anderson's Red Army.



2 Zooming in to the territory map tells me Napoleon's got Russia. Not for long matey!



3 It's bound to be well defended so I better bring in as much heavy shit as poss. This should do the trick.



4 The battle begins and the lads are ready to attack. Let's see what we're up against.



5 Oh, nice one Napolers, I can see you're a dab hand at this base-defending lark.



6 And they're off! The attack squad goes marching down and operation No-one In Sight gets underway.

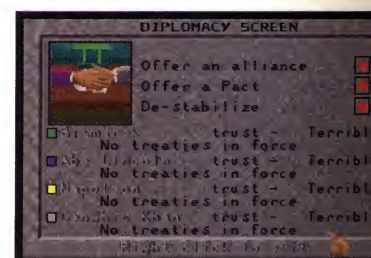


7 Napoleon's H.Q. is about to become a thing of the past. Meanwhile, his strike craft pilot stands by and has a cup of tea.



8 Oh glorious victory. The battle is over, Russia is mine and all I had to do was turn up.

"The major problem is the lack of intelligence of all the computer opponents. Either they're spending all their money on intelligence and stuff or they're just plain thick. You get to the point where you want to scream, 'Christ, will nobody fight me in this game?'



(Above) No chance of making any allies as none of the other lot trust me. So who needs 'em?

Weapons, tanks and other big boys stuff

No self respecting General would walk on to the field of battle without oodles of big, bad, noisy guns and planes and stuff. You don't get much of that in *Global*, but you do get to play around with this stuff instead.

Infantry: Incredibly slow and wimpy. Renowned for getting to the scene of a crisis hours after everyone's gone home.

Mechanised Infantry:

The same guys except zooming around in a truck. Effective in large numbers.

Air Mobile Infantry:

The same guys except zooming around in a helicopter. Handy for sneaky attacks on enemy installations.

Light Armour: Cheap and cheerful combat tanks. Best used for taking out air defence units before your strike planes move in.

Heavy Armour: Mean, lean, ass-kicking mothers, and the best units on the battlefield. Buy a few of these and no-one will ever call your pint a poof again.

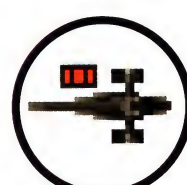
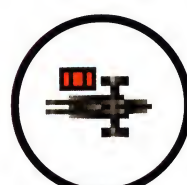
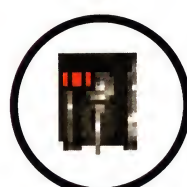
Light Artillery: Small peashooters. Inexpensive and crap. These couldn't take out an enemy unit in a fit.

Heavy Artillery: Big peashooters. Outrageously expensive and crap. Useful as a last line of defence, but then you need to buy about a million of them.

Air Defence: Anti-aircraft jobbies. Cheap and reasonably effective against enemy air attacks.

Air Combat Interceptor: Devastatingly effective against strike aircraft and air infantry.

Air Ground Strike: A single bomb dropped from one of these can inflict massive damage on an enemy installation. Pricey, but effective.



The big white dots represent big cash-rich cities and that's where you should be heading first.

yourself instead of waiting for it to be resolved over a series of turns. Clicking the satellite icon at this point brings you to the battle screen. You can call up an overhead map of the battlefield to see exactly where all the units are or you can zoom in and scroll around the battlefield manually.

Your battle objectives are determined by whether you're attacking or defending. If attacking, all you need do is destroy the enemies' H.Q. and the battle is over, regardless of how many units are left. This is unrealistic, as I'm sure the enemy might be a little miffed and may just retaliate in major fashion.

Once you've figured out what units are most effective against enemy H.Q. i.e. strike aircraft, air mobile and mechanised infantry, it's a case of building lots of armies of this type and attacking everything in sight; you just can't lose.

Defending is more tricky as you have to take out all enemy units to win. Oddly, it becomes apparent that the enemy have not twigged that destroying your H.Q. will win them the battle, so they wander around attacking everything, giving you time to take them out. Generally, despite the game having great sound effects, the satellite battles are still a bit of a disappointment.

But that's not the worst of it. The major problem is the lack of intelligence of all the computer opponents. Even at expert level, they seem clueless. You can storm across a front-line late in the game, only to find it inadequately defended. Either they're spending all their money on intelligence and stuff or they're just plain thick. You get to the point where you want to scream 'Christ, will nobody fight me in this game?'

Global Non-Domination

Impressions, the authors, describe *Global Domination* as the ultimate multi-player conquest simulation. Not quite so; you can have up to five human players playing in turn on the same machine, but they can only play at simple complexity level. The only way to have a multi-player game of depth is to link up over a modem or to link two PCs via their serial ports.

Despite all its shortcomings, I still found *Global Domination* absorbing and addictive for all the time I played it, but this is because I kept thinking that as I moved up difficulty levels I would eventually get into some serious scraps. It never happened! Even the option to create your own worlds to play in doesn't help, as the opponents don't get any better and you can win in the same way as in the normal game.

Global Domination is a missed opportunity to make a great strategy game. The graphics are good, the interfaces for all the screens are intuitive and easy to use, and the basic gameplay is there. Unfortunately, seasoned strategists will probably be sticking it back on the shelf after three or four days. **Z**

PC ZONE score

Slick, addictive strategy game but it presents no long-term challenge.

65

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Impressions
Telephone: 071 351 2133

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640k (585k free)
Minimum Processor: 286 or faster
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2.6Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib Gold, Roland, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro, PC speaker
Controls: Mouse
Comments: Fast 386 or better essential if you want to play the game with the battle scenes

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Flight Sim Toolkit



After impressing everyone with his '747 Flies Through Train Tunnel Pursued By Spitfires' film from *Stunt Island*, we thought we'd try **Paul Presley** on something a little more serious.

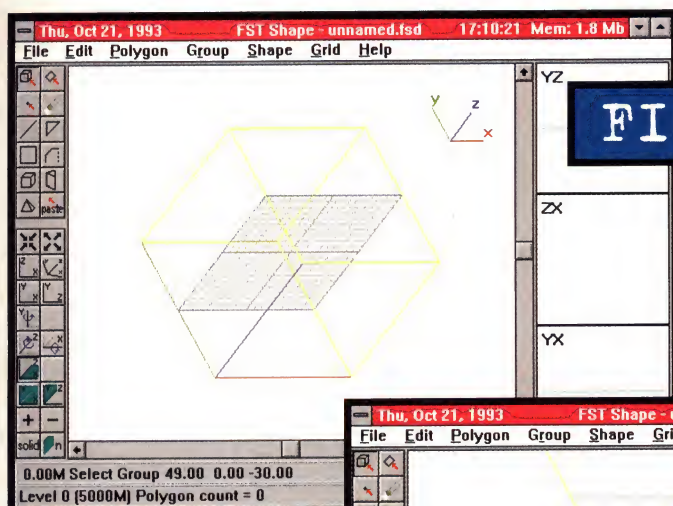


FIG 1

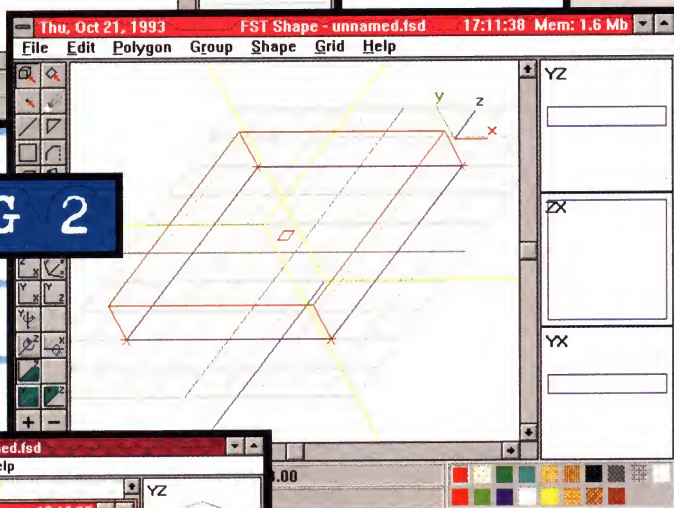


FIG 2

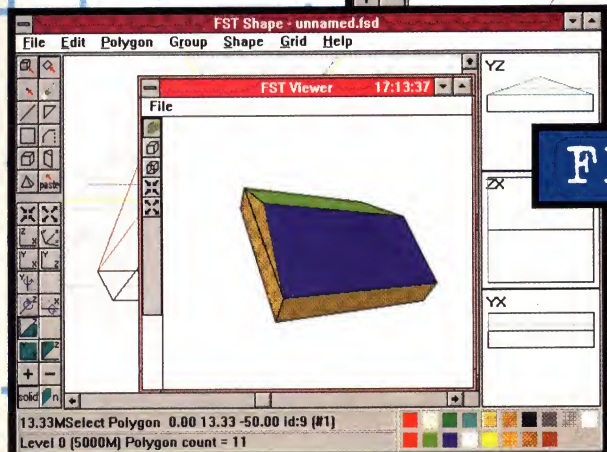


FIG 3



From my earliest dabbings with *The Professional Adventure Writer* on the ZX Spectrum to the many wonderful hours spent with *Stunt Island* emulating David Lean's magnificent 'returning home' scene from *Memphis Belle*, I have always

been fascinated by the game creator.

So *Flight Sim Toolkit* beckons. When I first heard about it I must admit to having my curiosity more than a trifle aroused, especially since it was coming from the same stable that delivered the remarkable *AV-8B Harrier Assault*. I have played many flight simulators/simulations/what you will, and have often said to whoever may have been passing: 'Why didn't they do this?' or, 'I wish such a thing had been included'. Quite understandably then, when yon Mr Editor chappie handed me the garishly-painted box I was happier than a middle-aged man rediscovering his youth, somewhere behind that old chest in the attic. How could I have foreseen the headaches and troublesome times that lay ahead? I couldn't. I stumbled into them blindly. Let me take you through the experience.

Part one - The tutorials and general tinkering

The first step, after installation, with any product such as this is to dive into the manual. Not to read it - heaven forbid - but to find the quickstart or the tutorial section and to start treating right from the word go. There were two of them waiting for me. The first introduced me to the

3D modelling section of the package (FIG. 1), an area that, on the face of it (and backed up with a few glances at the manual's 13 pages), was scary enough to allow me to watch all three *Omen* films afterwards and say, 'Hah, call that scary? I've seen more frightening graphic modelling kits!'. And it was true, I had.

We'll start, it said, by creating a warehouse. Lumme. I wasn't even able to fix the cover over the letterbox on our front door and here they are asking me to build a warehouse. Select the Cuboid button, it reassured me - patronisingly adding that it was the button four rows down with a picture of a cube on it - and draw a rectangle on the grid. Everything was fine up until now, but this meant actually approaching the modelling area. What if I did something wrong? What if I clicked in the wrong place and Windows decided to crash taking my hard disk with it? Pull yourself together, I thought. Click that rectangle. So I did (FIG. 2).

A few button actions and a paint job later and there it was - a warehouse in all its 3D glory (FIG. 3). Okay, so it had orange walls, a green and blue roof and no visible means of entry, but who cares? I had actually created something using a CAD package and it felt good. So the tinkering began. I opened a few sample shapes and nearly fainted at their complexity (FIG. 4). My warehouse was simply a rectangular box and a triangular roof. These things had more polygons than a room full of Monty Python parrot sketches. I'd never be able to... no, never. I went back to the manual and tutorial number two.

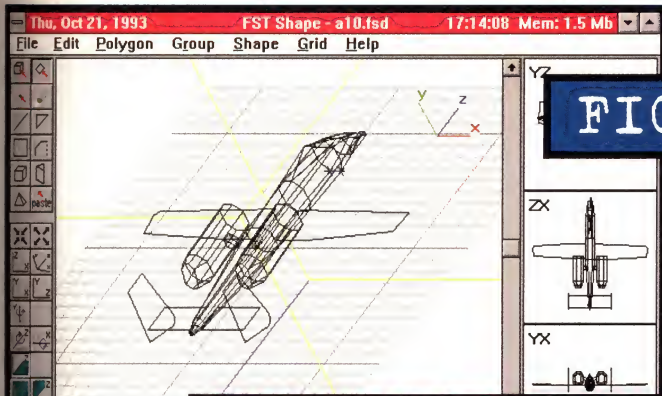


FIG 4

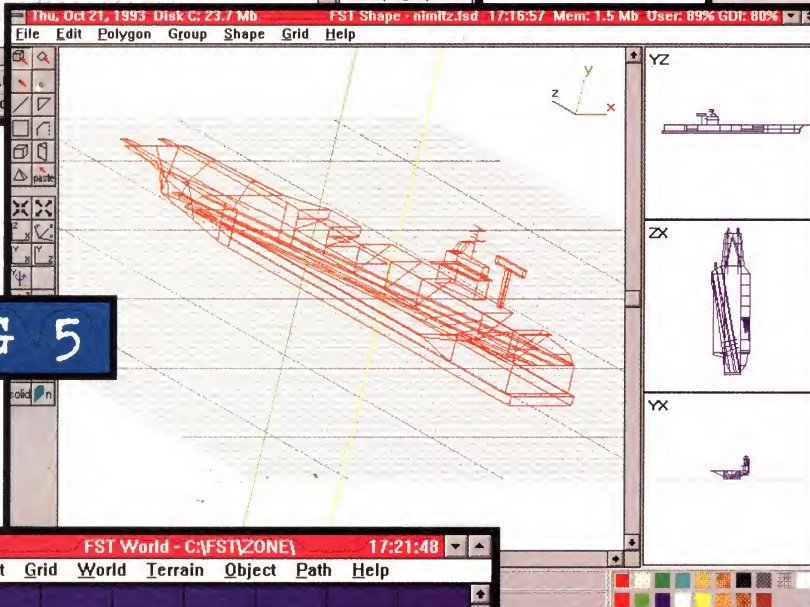


FIG 5

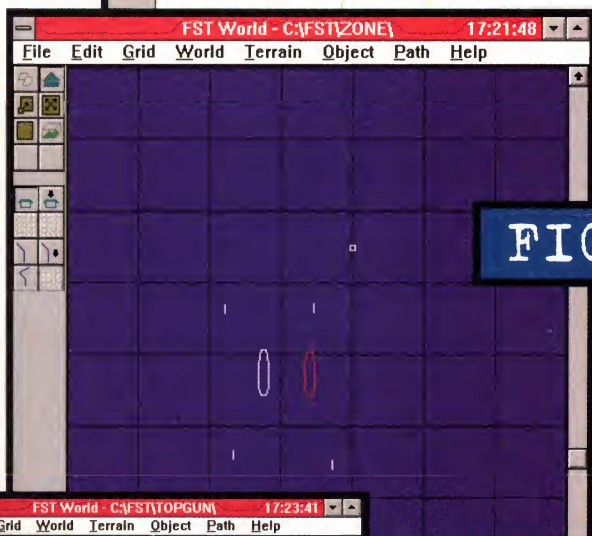


FIG 6

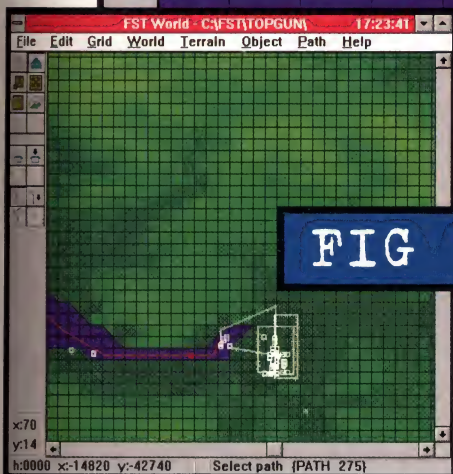


FIG 7

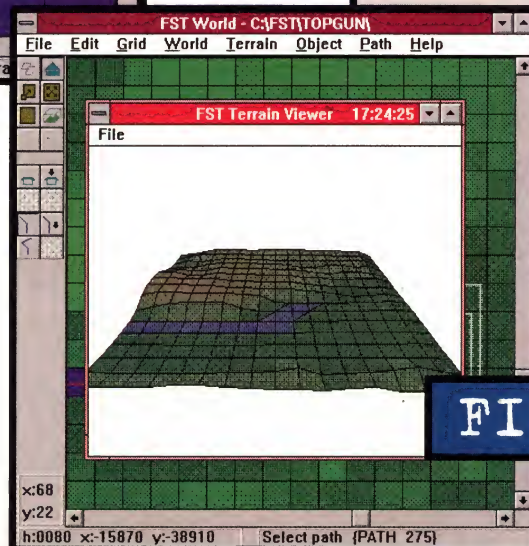


FIG 8

This revealed one of the package's biggest flaws: it demands far too much from the user. The advanced tutorial was supposed to take me through creating a full flight sim scenario, from building the world to placing the objects and flying the actual game. The trouble was, it never went into enough detail. It told me to load the predefined image of an aircraft carrier into the Shape Editor and modify its shape (FIG. 5) but didn't tell me how to modify it, just to do it. It said delete a few polygons. I clicked on the first polygon I could see, pressed delete and erased the entire ship. Then I ran away to the World Editor.

It wanted me to deposit my modified aircraft carrier into the game world, allying it with several U-boats and FW-190s (the scenario called for a WWII setting you see). Into the sea they went (FIG. 6), a task made much easier by the fact that there was nothing but sea into which they could be placed. Nowhere did it tell me how to create land – a flaw that showed itself when it told me to put my own bases and planes in. There was nowhere to put them.

I'd followed the tutorials as closely as I knew how, and was still none the wiser as to how to use the product for doing anything more than building the odd warehouse or two and dumping them in the sea. It was time to draw upon that dangerous substance known as initiative and go exploring. I clicked, I zoomed, I opened, I closed and by the end of my first experience, I came to the conclusion that a) *Flight Sim Toolkit* needed a second manual devoted to really in-depth tutorials for all parts of the product and b) it was the kind of product that always makes a mess of the first date but acts a little more relaxed by the second. I decided to let it off the hook for the moment and agreed to take it to dinner the following evening.

Part Two – Reading the manual with furrowed brow

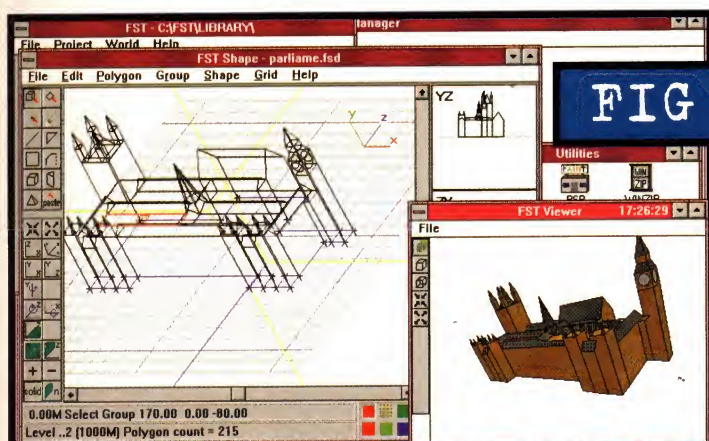
Dolled up in my best bib and tucker I re-entered the Toolkit. This time I was going in on my own terms. I would approach each of the five creation segments individually, armed with the by now well-read manual to see what I could gain. The World Editor came first.

The World Editor is where the main work in the kit is done. Not only is the map created, but the objects are all placed and given various attributes and routes, and pathways for the enemy are planned (FIG. 7). The headaches begin when you realise you can put all of this information in anything from 2500 to 24.5 million square kilometres. Naturally I plumped for the minimum.

Creating the world was actually quite easy once I got into it. Raising and lowering land was a piece of cake after all (FIG. 8). The menus were pretty self-explanatory and the future once again looked promising, meaning trouble was just around the corner.

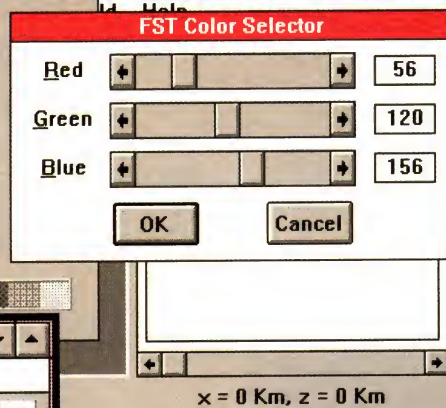
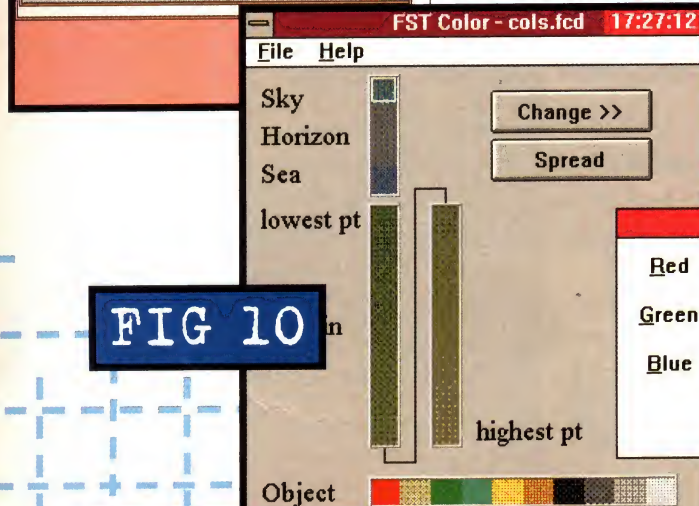
The trouble came in the form of the Shape Editor and it was no stranger. I may have made my warehouse here but I wasn't ready to call it home. I just could not come to terms with this polygon modelling device. It wasn't friendly





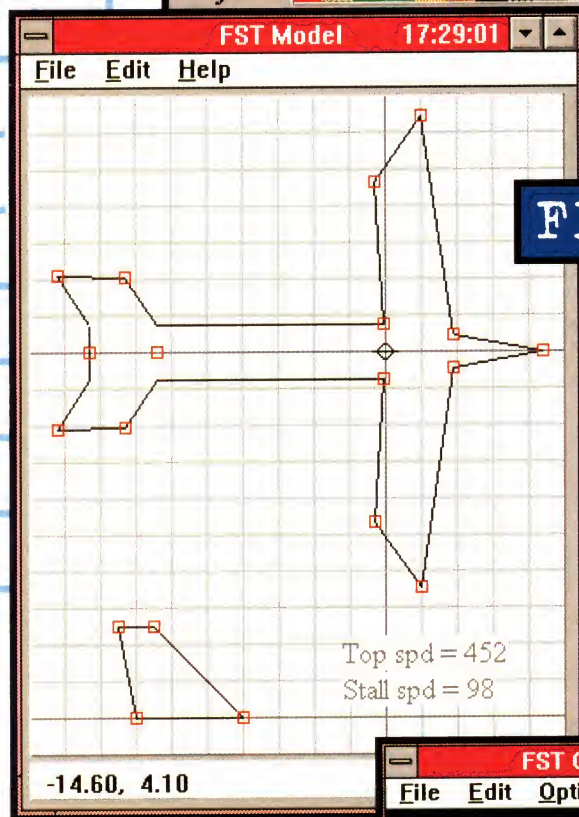
enough and I couldn't grasp its complexities. It appeared to be a tool of the most frightening depth. With the exception of curvatures I guessed that just about any three dimensional shape was possible (FIG. 9). I stuck with the ones provided and moved on.

The Colour Editor (FIG. 10) was simplicity itself in comparison, as was the Model Editor (FIG. 11). The former adjusts the colour schemes used in the game (turn the sky red - fly on Mars!), while the latter defines the planes' characteristics. The Model Editor would have benefited from an extra pamphlet of sample plane-settings, but most of the time the ones that came as ready-made files sufficed. Finally the Cockpit Editor allowed me to determine what the player would be seated in once into the game (FIG. 12). Again, a few extra samples wouldn't have gone amiss, but on the whole it was nothing too tricky.



Part Three - The full monty

They say that familiarity breeds contempt. So far the only part of FST I haven't liked is the Shape Editor (and the lack of decent documentation) but I would hardly call myself familiar with it. Anyhow, using the pre-generated models and having thoroughly immersed myself with all the other areas, it was time to put it all together and create a fully working flight sim.



The plot was thus. A set of tropical islands, one in each of the bottom corners of the map and a couple towards the centre. In one corner lies an enemy base smuggling arms to an arsenal in the other corner. A ship travels between the two. The player starts from an aircraft carrier at the top of the screen and has to first fly to the base and destroy it; head towards and destroy the arsenal, sinking the ship en route; then head back home. Just to add to the challenge, the islands in-between the carrier and the base are home to an enemy fighter squadron.

Step one was to create the islands. Ah, simplicity. The islands were promptly raised from the sea and the objects were scattered upon them (FIG. 13). A couple of AA Guns here, an enemy HQ there. When it came to the ship I encountered the first of the problems. Fortunately it was a simple case of the manual not making things clear. I was uncertain as to how to get the arms-carrying ship from island A to island B. Eventually I worked out that I needed to create an invisible depot for the ship to start from and link it to a path (FIG. 14). Okay, my fault. The next bit was more harrowing.

Placing my carrier and giving it the properties of a runway was simple enough, as was putting my F-14 (the chosen plane) onto it (FIG. 15). The trouble was getting it to work. Until now I'd only dabbled with the actual flight simulator section of the package. I'd had a quick buzz with the two, frankly unimpressive, sample games and found them wanting. This time was different. Exiting Windows and starting the sim (first discovering that my chosen cockpit

FIG 12



FIG 13



FIG 14

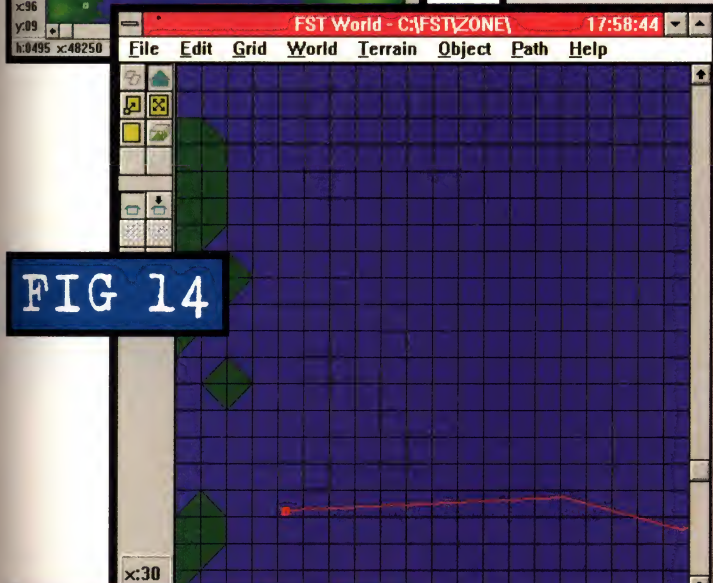


FIG 15

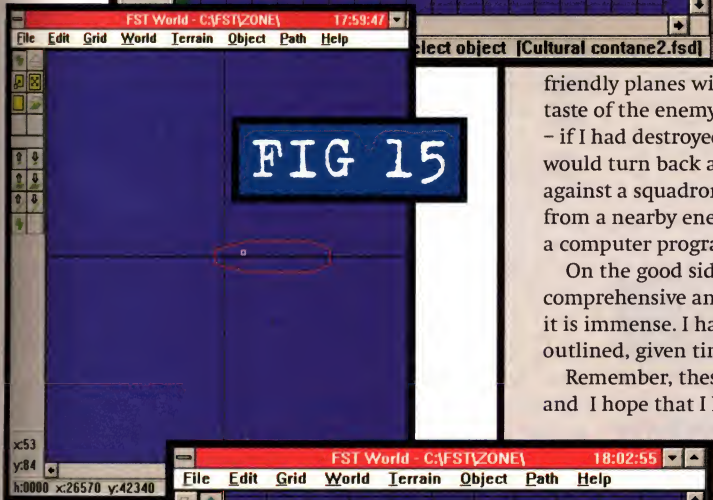


FIG 16

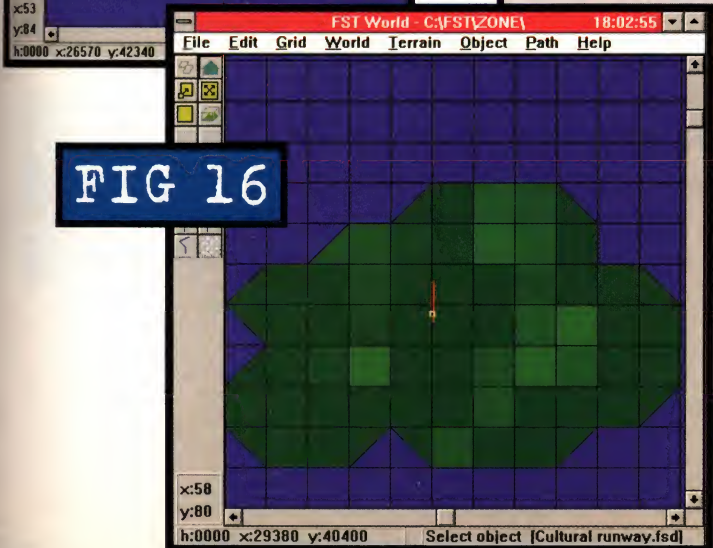


illustration was unusable, meaning a return to Windows and a quick change), all thoughts that *Flight Sim Toolkit* was at last showing real promise were banished quicker than an Olympic athlete taking drugs. Everything was crashing and my speakers were screaming. Exiting back to DOS and re-entering *Flight Sim Toolkit*, I concluded that the problem was that my plane was crashing with my carrier. Apparently only land-based missions are possible. Ho hum. Change the ship to an island and everything was hunky-dory (FIG. 16). It would have been nice to have been told this earlier on.

Another problem was that I couldn't seem to get the enemy airbase to work. No matter how many times I flew over it nothing would come out and attack me. I had a feeling this was something to do with pathways but since

this aspect hadn't been explained anywhere I decided to leave it.

Eventually I had a flight sim that was pretty similar to the one I had first envisaged, yet somehow much more simplistic. Flying around in it was less of a thrill than I had thought. An anticlimax even. The process of creation had far outstripped the enjoyment of the results. Strange considering that this is the very same flight model as *AV-8B* (a truly wonderful game).

Wednesday beckons

I am writing this now while sitting far from *Flight Sim Toolkit*. I have had my brief romance and have been left a better man. As with all relationships, there were good times and bad. The bad were mainly a lack of detailed instructions and the fact that it relies too heavily on the technical creation process rather than the game design side. I would have liked to create campaign scenarios and have had

friendly planes with me in the sky, rather than the bitter taste of the enemy. I wanted to be able to create conditions – if I had destroyed the arsenal first, the oncoming ship would turn back and flee for home; or if I decided to go up against a squadron of bombers they would radio for backup from a nearby enemy airfield. I wanted to create a game not a computer program.

On the good side, however, *Flight Sim Toolkit* is extremely comprehensive and the number of things you can do with it is immense. I have no doubt that most of the problems I outlined, given time, would throw up solutions.

Remember, these were the experiences I encountered and I hope that I haven't put you off it: that would be

wrong. *Flight Sim Toolkit* is well worth having, for dabblers such as I and for those who want a more thorough rummage. I myself will continue to create with it. Alas I fear I shall do no more than sub-standard flights of fancy. You, however, I know to be creativity personified, and, as such, you should do much better.



Alternatives

There's only one real title that's worth working with and that's *Stunt Island*, but that doesn't really let you create games.

There's no overall creator either: *Unlimited Adventures* gives you the tools to make some rather bland and unappealing ALGs; the *3D Construction Kit* family is good for a few polygon-based laughs but can't provide you with any lasting interest and the *Aircraft and Adventure Factory* is limited to working with *Flight Sim 4*.

An even more limited creation kit is *Jack Nicklaus Ultimate Golf And Course Design Signature Edition* which lets you design a golf course.

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386DX

Minimum Speed: 33MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 8Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster and compatibles

Controls: Mouse, joystick

Comments: Needs Windows 3.1 or higher

PCZONE score

Recommended, but only if you find *Stunt Island* limiting. It can be very heavy going.

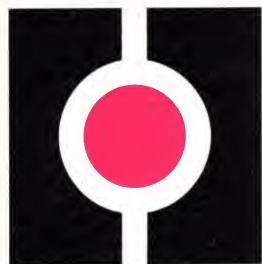
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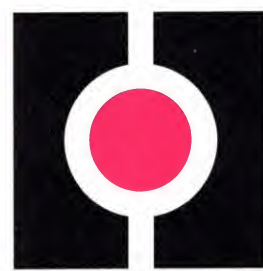
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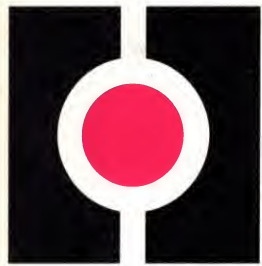
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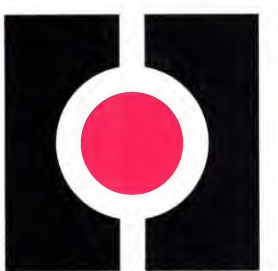
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(Left) Cool Coyote is aptly named indeed - he's probably the only mutt in the world capable of holding his head underwater for half an hour at a time. (Right) The easy way to get chilblains.

Fire & Ice

Always a sucker for cute graphics and old-fashioned gameplay, **Laurence Scotford** got hot and cold flushes when this converted Amiga-classic dropped through our letterbox. But has it stood the test of time?

IT SEEMS A SHAME that while most strategy games, adventure games, role-playing games, flight sims and war games are initially developed on the PC, owners of the machine still have to rely largely on conversions of Amiga games if they want something as 'unsophisticated' as a beat 'em-up, shoot 'em-up or platform game. The one happy aspect of this sad state of affairs is that the Amiga has had a fair few gems in this department, this particular game being one of them.

Long In the tooth

If you'll pardon the abysmal pun, the hero of *Fire & Ice*, one Cool Coyote, is getting a bit long in the tooth now. One of my colleagues, looking over my shoulder as I played it, identified it immediately as 'very 1985'. In fact the game is only a couple of years old, but in this field, two years is a long time.

Despite its age, however, a few minutes of play is enough to reveal features which are quite recent additions to the platform game repertoire. Most notable of these is the smoothly undulating landscape, along which our canine hero slips, trips and slides. Blocky, Lego-like constructions are passé these days. Then you've got your power-up blocks, your invisible and moving platforms and your level-timer. The latter is really nicely implemented as a night and day sequence with a quaint animation of the moon or sun being lowered into place by a crane.

Bringing up baby

What really makes *Fire & Ice* a hit is the absolutely superb animation - better than any you've seen in

a game of this type. There are some great original features too, like the little kiddie coyotes that are to be found on each level. These will follow you around when you come close to them and they have a two-fold purpose. Firstly, they provide extra - albeit largely uncontrollable - firepower and secondly, if you get them right through the level, you'll get an extra life for each one.

The catch

So, *Fire & Ice* is an old, but great game, with top-notch animation and some superb features, but is there anything at all about it which isn't good? Well yes, there is, and I'm sorry to say that it has nothing to do with the way the game looks, sounds or plays.

The copy protection is the most pedantic and downright silly I've ever come across. First of all

'The copy protection is the most pedantic and downright silly I've come across.'

you have to go through the usual 'looking up the word in the manual' malarkey, then you have to cross reference this with a number on an enclosed chart. The chart shows you a picture of an incomplete key and you

have to remove pieces of the key on screen until it matches the one on the chart. By the time you've done this, and got it wrong a couple of times because you miscounted a line or looked at the wrong column on the chart, you'll be tearing your hair out. What's even more infuriating is that by the time you've read this, some malicious ten year old will have created a hacked version of the game which defeats the copy protection, so anybody who's really determined to get a free copy will probably be able to do so. The only people who'll suffer will be the genuine buyers of the game who have to endure such a long-winded copy protection system. ☹

PCZONE score

A fun, but difficult game, marred only by an over-inflated price and ridiculous copy-protection.

75

Price: £29.99 Out: Now
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PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K with 520K of free-base memory
Minimum Processor: 8086
Minimum Speed: 8MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 1.2Mb
Minimum Graphics: 16-colourVGA
Soundcards: Roland LAPC-1, Sound Blaster and compatibles, Ad-Lib
Controls: Keyboard, Analogue joystick
Comments: DOS 3.2 or higher



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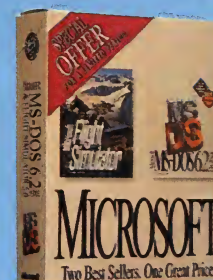
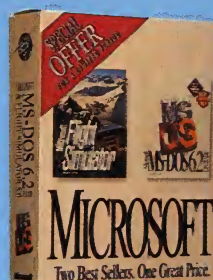
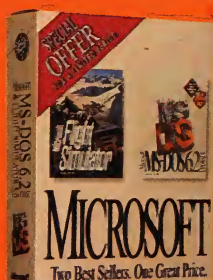
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Zone are offering our readers the opportunity, not only to upgrade their copy of DOS to the latest and most powerful version, but also to get the world's best flight simulation into the bargain.

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Flights of fancy

If you've read issue eight you'll know we raved on endlessly about Flight Simulator 5.0, awarding it

an amazing 90 percent – a PC Zone Classic award – and heralding it as the definitive light aircraft flight simulation. The latest version of Flight Simulator features detailed, texture-mapped 3D graphics making it the most realistic serious simulation available today. New features include latitude and longitude indicators to assist in navigation, a 'land me' option for beginners, realistic sound effects and a new complex weather system.

Question time

If you fancy having these two great products installed on your hard drive, just answer the following simple questions, fill out the coupon and send it to us. The first ten correct entries pulled out of the editor's hat will find a Microsoft MS-DOS® 6.2/Flight Simulator 5.0 double pack winging its way to them.

- 1) **DOS stands for:**
 - (a) Data Ordering System
 - (b) Disk Operating System
 - (c) Directly Orchestrated Software
- 2) **Which of these aircraft is not featured in the basic Flight Simulator 5.0 package?**
 - (a) MiG-21
 - (b) Learjet
 - (c) Cessna Skylane
- 3) **The feature of MS-DOS® 6.2 that can double the size of your disk is:**
 - (a) Disk Stretcher
 - (b) Big Boy
 - (c) DoubleSpace

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ANSWERS: 1) 2) 3)

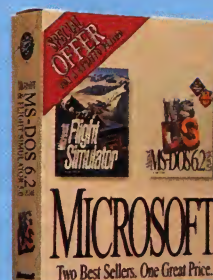
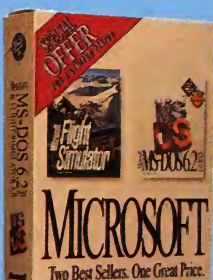
Send your completed coupon to: **Two for the price of fun, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ.**

RULES Employees of Microsoft or Dennis Publishing caught entering this competition will be grounded.

● The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Entries received after Thursday 4 February 1994 will be gracing our wastepaper recycling bin with their presence.

● For a free entry to this competition send a stamped SAE to Microsoft Competition Issue 11 Free Entry, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ.

N.B. MS-DOS® 6.2 requires an MS-DOS® operating system version 2.11 or later, OS/2, or an operating system compatible with MS-DOS® 2.11 or later. A personal computer with an 8088 or higher processor is needed and 512K of memory. Flight Simulator 5.0 requires a personal computer using an 80386 or higher microprocessor, the MS-DOS® operating system version 3.2 or higher, 600K of free conventional memory and 1Mb extended or expanded memory, a high density disk drive, a hard drive with 9Mb free space, an EGA adaptor with 256K display memory or a VGA or SVGA adaptor. A Microsoft® mouse or compatible, sound board and joystick or flight yoke with a 100% IBM-compatible game control adaptor are all recommended.



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MASTER OF ORION

He claims to be neither a megalomaniac, nor an accountant, but we're not so sure. We reckon that **Andy Clerkson** has these latent tendencies, which are brought to the fore when playing *Master Of Orion*.



SPACE. THINK ABOUT it for too long and it can do your head in. Space strategy games can have much the same effect. The more you play them, the more you lose touch with reality. You get so engrossed in the defence revenue of the planet Dork, and the race to be the first to develop the Fluoride-Paste Fusion laser, that events happening in the real world (i.e. not on your PC screen) seem light years away. Of course this can happen with any kind of game, but it's easier to explain away the thrills of ripping the head off a sprite in a beat 'em-up or flying the latest turbo jet in a new flight sim than it is to say, 'Actually, I've spent the last few nights allocating the planetary budget for Zwathos and developing a nucleus-schmucleus engine that can reach a top speed of ten parsecs a sencoid'. People tend to say: 'Err, sorry mate, I haven't got any change,' and walk off at a brisk pace. But space strategies can be a lorra fun and *Master Of Orion* is a true strategy game, more akin to *Civilization* than a war game. MicroProse has produced a game for the megalomaniac where you start off with a single planet and attempt to pull an entire galaxy into your grasp by fighting, spying, breeding, constructing, engineering and, of course, accounting.

Contrary to the popular saying, the future is not always rosy. Over the next 200 years the Earth's population could easily outstrip its resources and threaten to end life as we know it. And if the world becomes too small and barren, our only hope is to find another one. This is the premise behind *Master of Orion*. In MicroProse's work of science fiction, by the 23rd Century ten races own the technical wizardry enabling them to explore deep space – so they do. This is not to find out if anyone else is out there; the intention is to claim undiscovered planets for themselves and settle nice little families on them to breed,

exploit its mineral wealth and act as a base to go even further into space.

Master Of Orion kicks off with just you (as Emperor of one of the ten races), your over-populated planet and a galaxy of stars – all as yet



The Psilons form the infamous Blobbly colony in deep space.



WANTED!

SUPREME LEADER OF THE UNIVERSE

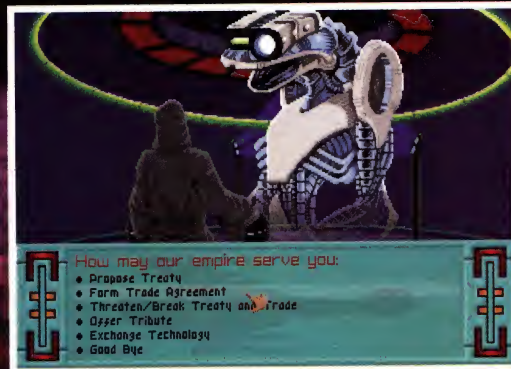
Expanding planet requires a dynamic individual to fill this exciting new post as Master of Orion. On the right are the qualities a prospective candidate will need...

1 A meticulous eye for detail

It's a cinch being emperor of one measly planet, but when you begin to colonise things get a bit complicated. A tab can be kept on each planet under your control by clicking on the star on the main map and viewing the right-hand table. From here resources can be allocated to build factories, ships and defence systems; keep the environment clean from industrial waste and invest in research. Each planet can only build one type of ship at a time but these, as well as inhabitants, can be transported by the bucketload to others. Once your planet is up and running and churning out a good deal of industry, invest in defence systems to hold on to what you've got.

1





2. A desire to use new technology

All the other races you come across will be developing amazing new weapons and force fields, so you need to keep ahead in the technology race. Since resources are limited, you need to decide what areas of science to invest in. This is achieved via the Technology screen where you can direct your scientist's research. All areas need to be covered in the end, but it may be necessary to concentrate on one thing for a while to overcome a specific problem. For instance, if a lot of stars are out of range of your ships, it's worth throwing a lot of eggs in the propulsion basket for a few years so that the scientists can come up with a groovy new starship engine.

3. A 'get things done' approach towards work

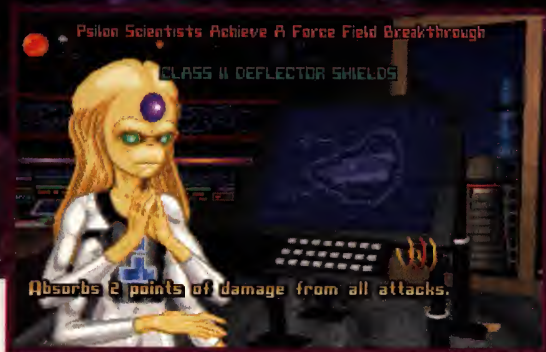
If the boffins are coming up with incredible technological breakthroughs every couple of light years, you need to put them into action immediately before some other race steals or develops them itself. The main cause for consternation here is in re-equipping your ships. Only six ship-designs can be worked on at one time, so if a new fusion bomb is developed, an older design must be scrapped and a new one built to incorporate the latest technology. This is essential in the 23rd Century as spacecraft can become ancient quicker than you can say 'Arthur Negus'.

4. A two-faced attitude towards business associates

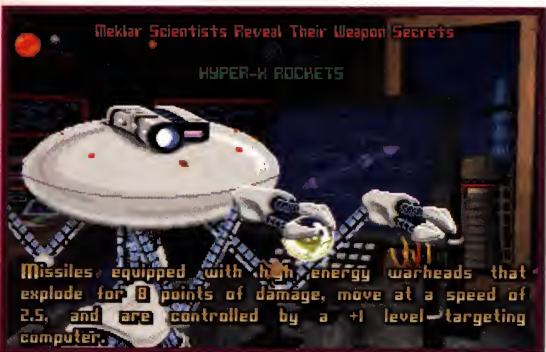
As all politicians know, the way to win a vote is to worm your way into the good books of the non-committed parties and then stab them in the back. When you come across alien life-forms, they pop up on this screen and you can request an audience with the opposing emperor to make treaties or trade agreements or just to say 'Hi'. Once contact has been made you can also start planting some spies in their bases who can reveal trade secrets or rouse up a bit of a workers' revolution.

5. A cold heart and a desire to win at all costs

Sabotage and espionage are fine if you want to wait around for zillions of light years for something to happen, but sometimes you just have to grasp the nettle and perpetrate a spot of genocide. This brings you into the combat screen. Any movement into another planet's airwaves and you'll have to fight (or retreat from) the orbiting enemy craft. Combat is turn-based and distance covered and damage inflicted is down to how well you build your ships. You can take on opposing races without starting an all-out war, but any use of biological weapons will turn the whole galaxy against you.



Here we see the advantages of having an extra pair of hands.



The 'Smash' robot moves up the evolutionary ladder.

undiscovered. By sending out scout ships to find the best planets for habitation, and following up the good leads with colony ships, you merrily go about your business of empire-making. Unfortunately, there's a whole load of other races out there doing the same thing and, as history has taught us when emperors look to expand their boundaries it all ends in tears – usually war. When half of the galaxy has been colonised by you, or others, a High Council is formed on a proportional representation type system – each race gets one vote for every 100 units of population (a none too euphemistic phrase for, er, men and women, psilans and psilanesses, sakkra and sakkraesses – whatever life form you happen to be). If any race gets a two-thirds majority on the High Council, the emperor of that race is crowned High Master aka Master of Orion aka general Big Cheese and winner of the game.

There are many ways to achieve this objective, from exploiting the undiscovered planets and being nice to other races in the hope that they will cast their vote for you at the council meeting (Naive Strategy), to massacring any alien you come across and taking their planets (Foolhardy-But-Fun Strategy). A mixture of the two (Play-The-Game-Properly Strategy) is well advised. The best way to swamp the galaxy with members of your race is to find the randiest buggers possible, plonk them down on an uninhabited planet and get the atmosphere just right for breeding – this doesn't mean soft lights and Barry White records, but concentrating resources on keeping the atmosphere clean and free of industrial waste. Macho types can also just bomb the crap out of an already-inhabited planet and then take it for themselves.

Searching out new life, new civilisations and keeping a handle on the ones you already have is a full-time job and not for those with a short attention span. *Master Of Orion* is not just a combat-strategy game, but the full life, universe and everything game. A watchful eye must be kept on all of your planets as well as finding new ones and keeping tabs on the other races. With a number of colonies under your belt, resources need to be juggled carefully: technology needs to advance apace; new ships have to be designed to incorporate all the latest gizmos; planets need to be defended; pirates need to be shoed off, and life forms and hardware need to be transported to and fro



Attitudes towards you vary from species to species.



The pilot in ship number five starts to worry about his chances...

around the galaxy. Each planet has a set of status bars which keep you updated on the time and energy being put into various activities, and these need to be changed constantly as you exploit that planet's resources.

The initial gameplay is a pretty straightforward 'find planet, colonise it, allocate resources to increase productivity and search for another planet' scenario. A tad boring once you have the hang of it, but luckily it's not long before you stumble across other races. (Galaxy size and the amount of alien colonies is user-definable; if you play in a small galaxy other life forms are encountered almost immediately, whereas this can take some time with huge game-maps.) When another race is first encountered you have a pedestrian turn-based dogfight but once contact has been made you can communicate and attempt to make trade agreements or alliances, swap technology secrets or declare war. Becoming pally with other races is beneficial for trade and is a good war-avoidance tactic, but it also allows you to plant spies who will get involved in industrial espionage and sabotage.

A hefty wad of manual makes the whole thing daunting at first sight and, although the interface is simple for a game of this complexity, its menus within menus within menus puts the user on a steep learning curve. But once you've worked out how to negotiate the galaxy it does become gripping and it's actually hard not to get excited about learning a new terraforming technique, or being the first in the galaxy with a Fusion engine. Good organisational skills and a penchant for status bars are a pre-requisite. Shoot 'em-up fiends should not apply. **Z**

PC ZONE score

A good one for all the accountants out there.

72

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PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Covox, Pro Audio Spectrum, Roland
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse
Comments: Mouse recommended

IN PERSPECTIVE

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B-WING

The X-Wing is shaped like an 'X'. The Y-Wing resembles the letter 'Y'. The A-Wing isn't dissimilar to an 'A'. And the B-Wing? It's a crucifix with ion cannons. **David McCandless** sees a pattern emerging.

IT'S RUMOURED they are going to make three more *Star Wars* films. Prequels, if you like, to the first three, which actually were, as any Chewbacca buff will tell you, episodes four to six of the epic fairytale that is *Star Wars*.

Now, I don't want to be a killjoy. I don't want to shoot the X-Wing down before it's hyperspaced, as it were, but three more films detailing the youthful exploits of Darth, Obi Wan, Yoda, a baby Luke Skywalker, minus – and this is a big minus – Han Solo, Chewwy and Princess 'Two Brown Croissants As Ear Muffs Hairstyle' Leia, doesn't strike me as much fun. Or very interesting. See, we know what's going to happen. We know Darth will be lured to the dark side and Yoda will cop it, aged nine million, in a swamp with Jim Henson's hand up his backside. What more is there to tell?

Nevertheless, X-Wing will go from strength to strength, embodying all our fantasies about trench runs and space combat. This latest addition is B-Wing. It has the dual task of linking the storyline to *Rebel Assault* (jaws dropping on CD-ROM machines all over the country) – that is, the Rebels' escape to their new base on Hoth – and introducing the new alliance ship, glimpsed in *Return Of The Jedi* and now rendered in full 3D Xwing-o-mation.


B-Wing is a one-disk upgrade, which is easily installed into your existing XWING directory. As well as

providing the 20+ missions of Tour V, B (as we call it) comes with a Top Ace pilot, resplendent with medals from Tour IV (*Imperial Pursuit*) as well as several historical missions.

The new missions are not particularly remarkable. The B-Wings start off as prototypes which have to be protected from marauding Imperial scum. After a few standard X-Wing missions, you take the helm and lead the revolutionary new design into true combat, protecting the beleaguered fleet on its way to Hoth.

Why it's called a B-Wing is anyone's guess. It's

shaped like a crucifix and the bit you would hold (when warding off vampires, lying prostrate before God etc.) folds up to make it resemble a deadly, state-of-the-art tent peg. Frankly, I'm embarrassed to fly this daft spaceship, but what it loses in

aesthetics, it gains in all-round combat prowess. It has the X-Wing's firepower, the Y-wing's shield and hull strength, the A-Wing's speed and the looks of Yoda's penis – it's a winner against all Imperial vermin. Its power consumption is large and juggling of power-levels is needed. I can't say I noticed the subtle variation in handling characteristics, but the missions are tough and the three cut scenes (with guest appearances from Luke 'Kid' Skywalker and Princess 'We fancied her then, but don't now' Leia) provide some incentive. 

'The B-Wing folds up to make it resemble a deadly, state-of-the-art tent peg'

PC ZONE score

Your sister either fancied Han Solo or Luke Skywalker. You'll either fancy B-Wing or, er, something else.

72

Price: £19.99 Out: Now
Published: US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 1Mb
(896K EMS for sound)

Minimum Processor: 386SX

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 1Mb
(+16Mb for X-Wing)

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland, Pro Audio, Spectrum, General Midi

Controls: Mouse, Keyboard, Joystick (recommended)

Comments: Needs the original X-Wing game to play



(Top) Methinks a thing called 'Frigate Fear' won't be full of fluffy bunny-wunnies.
(Above) OI! blond blue-eyes still hasn't lost it.

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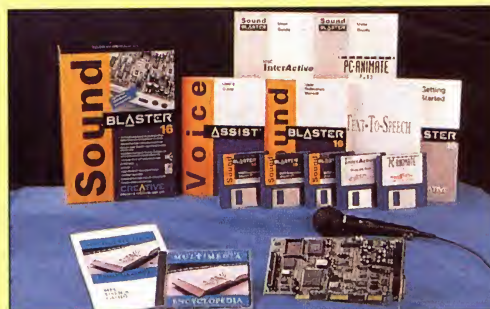
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Od's blood! My insides feel all twisted about!

'The concept behind Hack is a sound one. Nigh-on infinite dungeons for those Beholder-starved adventurers. Can't go wrong. Portable codes to pass on to your friends. Lovely. Er...'

DUNGEON HACK

While the bitmap-wrapped underworld dungeon epics glide, scroll and swivel ever onwards in their natty 360° way, flick-screen graph-paper RPGs are getting crushed underfoot. **David McCandless** goes adventuring in the latest attempt to revive the genre – *Dungeon Hack* and its 16 billion randomly-generated dungeons.

DUNGEON HACK, ostensibly, uses the *Eye Of The Beholder III* engine, although this is a much faster, much smoother version, avoiding the awful disk-accessing and mouse delays of its big brother. The whole thing has a much more polished feel, with a pleasant if hammy intro and all sorts of user-friendly title screens. Say: 'I shall see thee anon' to the elongated story sequences, multi-character parties, and enormous unmappable levels. Cheer: 'What ho!' to no storyline, a single character and automappable, auto-configurable, innumerable random dungeons.

Firstly, you define your character, either from a dubious stock of 'ones they did earlier' (in-built elves, trolls and mages), or through the usual choices of class (fighter, thief, cleric etc.), sex, alignment and portrait. Next, you make your first grown-up choice. Are you to experience an easy, moderate, hard or random dungeon? The choice for any self-respecting Dungeon Master is, of course, Random (see the 16 Million-Billion-Zillion panel) but let's just suppose you're just interested in the game and have plumped for the Moderate level, being, as you are, a little middle-of-the-road.

In the game...

The first thing you'll notice is that the playing area (usually one third) has been reduced to cram in all the elements which, before, were only a flick of the mouse away. The inventory now stands vertically on the left on the screen, leaving room for a stat box, an automap, a compass and the usual direction click-box. The in-game graphics also show signs of cramming. The customary four-framed animations are now down to two, with goblins, ghouls and trolls flicking robotically as they try to turn 90 degrees. The usual flotilla of doors, panels, keys and illusionary walls make up the trappings, along with the potions, scrolls and magical objects.

Gameplay-wise there are no surprises. Shunt around with the cursor keys or mouse. Click on objects to carry them over to your inventory. Right-button your combat hands to attack a

foe. Right-button your spellbook to unleash a magic missile or lightning bolt. You can rest to recover from wounds or heal yourself via the arcane arts. Keys open doors. Doors lead to caverns. Caverns thin into passageways. Passageways end in junctions. Junctions connect with doors. Etc. leads to etc. (you get the picture).

Vitriol

The concept behind *Hack* is a sound one. Nigh-on infinite dungeons for those *Beholder*-starved adventurers. Can't go wrong. Portable codes to pass on to your friends. Lovely. Endless entertainment. Er...

It seems they've put *Hack* up in a half-way house between a full blown dungeon-o-rama and the *Unlimited Adventures* system. The latter simply took the old-fashioned *Bard's Tale* engine (ye may ken it with some disdain) and revitalised it in one fell swoop by giving the player full freedom to design everything – graphics, mazes, title screen, plot – the whole



(Right) Waddaya mean I can't go that way? I can go anywhere. Surely my back-stage pass to Pink Floyd's 1989 world tour counts for something around here?

THE TEST

I decided to 'design' two dungeons. One using minimum on all the sliders (one pit, one zombie, one door), the other maxing out the elements (multi-level puzzles, lots of undead, and real death). I scribbled down the code for each one and then enticed my alter ego, Thorgandian Son of Thorgandia (Fact: his mother loved him too much and he has warm milk on his Weetabix) to brave the depths of... Dungeon Hagrathnanorrrobiborr.



THE EASY ONE

Thorg: I did hack and slay my way into the subterranean innards of the beast. Um, well, actually I only got as far as the above map shows before I was treacherously stabbed in the back by foul hobgoblins. I pressed the 'advance and slay effortlessly' key but, by some freak of circumstance, I somehow ended up retreating into a dead end.

On the whole, combat was untesting and effortless. You could just wait until a monster raised its arms to strike and then pummel it. Also, this foul menagerie of pus-eating filth sticks didn't have a cerebellum between them, and I led queues of them to their death with mine orbs closed. With HINTS on maximum, I discovered 'parchments' at every other junction. Cryptic messages described the experience of expired adventurers. The hints told of a weakness in their opponents which they had spotted too late (i.e. when dead).

Even with ILLUSIONARY WALLS on a minimum, my heightened senses discovered a couple of secret doors. Disturbingly though, the clandestine portal did not appear on my cartographers' aid.



THE HARD ONE

Thorg: I, Thorgandia (son of), freely admit that I did find the randomly generated HARD dungeon a mite testier than the previous catacomb. As the above map will testify, the concentrated puzzles (very easy) and multiple monster encounters did force me to pause for breath (and indeed death).

The scenery, as well as the layout, is generated randomly. The yellow metallic walls of this tough dungeon gave it an air of foreboding and scariness. The goblins and hobgoblins (the difference is mainly cosmetic) were still in evidence. I would like to have seen more variety in the opponents (but with 25 levels to go, who am I to complain).

The puzzles would hardly push Eric, the bog-standard geography student from Nottingham who appears on Blockbusters. There is a gem-shaped slot topped with a blue picture of the earth. In my possession is a blue gem. Would anyone like to hazard a guess at this monument to puzzledom?



16 MILLION-BILLION-ZILLION

Hack offers you the chance of spontaneously creating a squillion random dungeons, each one constructed around the needs of your character's class (mage dungeons are packed with scrolls; thieves' labyrinths are chock-a-block with pickable doors). In addition, with some deft handling of the sliders, you can increase the number of levels (from ten to 25), the number of monsters, food availability, key frequency and, indeed, all the things on the accompanying screenshot. The Death Real option ups the excitement factor of a dungeon by preventing load-a-saved-game-when-you-pop-your-clogs possibilities. Once you've set up your elements, a code (or 'seed') is generated which can then be given to your chums (as if).

nine furlongs. *Hack* misses the point totally; it's all or nothing in this game. By only being able to increase or decrease various elements in the game and not, as we all want, completely design our own adventure in the *Eye Of The Beholder* mould - maps, puzzles and all - *Hack* confines itself to a very limited audience.

Who, realistically, is going to play a dungeon drafted by their 'chum' when you know the only variation will be the number of illusionary walls or magic traps or pits or whatever? Who, realistically, is going to find increasing the number of undead or puzzles in a dungeon tantamount to actually, creatively making a dungeon all on their lonesome? Only a very sad, limited and unimaginative person, that's who. We, the thinking majority, want to design our own puzzles, our own encounters, our own storyline and not simply minutely vary somebody else's theme.

And, anyway, people only put themselves through these dungeon epics, not because the 'action' keeps their backside hovering precariously over the lip of their chair, but because they feel the excitement of exploration and are given the sense that they are testing their limits and, most importantly, because they feel they are part of some great plan. The dungeon has been cleverly orchestrated, the puzzles and monsters neatly choreographed, the whole thing set up by some unseen foe to test their mettle. A randomly-generated dungeon, which can be different each time, doesn't present these essentials. It doesn't present anything except the chance of more random dungeons beyond, with no great script or purpose to bind it together or encourage you to go on.

Overall

If you're looking for the next great dungeon epic, a sort of *Lands Of Lore* married to *Dungeon Master* but copping off with *Eye Of The Beholder* on the sly, then you'll have to look much further. *Hack* offers no more than a continuous and unimaginative outpouring of atypical dungeons which, minus the gelling agents (plot, sense of purpose, clever human programmer sticking in some bastard puzzles), doesn't really hold together as a dungeon adventure or a dungeon designer. **F**

PC ZONE score

Not enough there. Not enough design options. Not enough gameplay. Very hardened and grizzled role-players only.

62

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PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 25MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster/Pro, Ad-Lib, Roland
Controls: Mouse
Comments: 4Mb RAM required for digitized sound effects and optimal game performance



(Above) Eight, seven, six... I don't think I can wait much longer... five-four-three-two-one! Cooo-ee! I'm com-ing! Where are you? Darn - whose idea was it to play hide and seek down here anyway?

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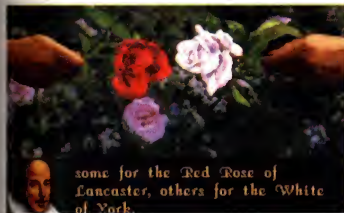
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Warwick the Kingmaker. If you win, this is what you'll look like. Better to lose, methinks.



KINGMAKER



WARS OF THE ROSES

The Wars of the Roses is the romantic name given to 40 years of near civil war in England between 1450 and 1490. In reality it was an exhibition of utterly disgraceful behaviour on the part of the English aristocracy. Nobles took sides in a power struggle for the throne and over the long period of unrest, there were scores of battles and executions, with many nobles switching sides and betraying one another. The Wars of the Roses finally ended on the bloody field of Bosworth when Richard III was slain, leaving Henry Tudor (VII) as the undisputed King of England. The object of *Kingmaker* is much the same, but not quite so bloody. The winner is the side that controls the last of the nine rivals for the throne.

Andrew Wright lops off a few heads in *Kingmaker*, US Gold's bloodthirsty recreation of the Wars of the Roses

BOARD GAME CONVERSIONS for the PC haven't always met with the same level of success as their originals, for a number of reasons. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, board games have an atmosphere all of their own with plenty of laughter and backstabbing along the way. Good, clean, family entertainment that you can't get from an Intel box. Secondly, the game mechanics can never be the same. Of course, the computer can do all the tedious things like adding up your assets and working out complex combat results. However, because of the relatively small size of the computer screen it's very hard to see everything that's going on at a glance – particularly in a strategy game with a large map area – and the large amount of work done by the computer can actually detract from enjoyment of the game. After all, we all like throwing dice, don't we?

Not to be put off, us Gold has tried very hard indeed with its latest release, a faithful conversion of the classic '70s board game, *Kingmaker*. *Kingmaker* was the nickname given to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, for his treacherous wheelings and dealings during the Wars of the Roses. The board game is an abstract strategy game in

which players control factions of nobles out to capture and crown a king, eliminating rival claimants to the throne as they go. On the way to the top, lots of gory battles, beheadings and plagues make life that bit more interesting – those were the days!

Kingmaker was one of those games that you either played once and forgot, or played for weeks or months without a break. I can remember playing long into the night in a dingy student hall of residence, in a smoke-infested room complete with a beer and vomit-stained floor and half a dozen supposedly intelligent human beings. Those really were the days...

What you get from us Gold is a set of three disks and a 120-page manual that includes an 80-page history lesson on the Wars of the Roses and a reasonably good guide to setting up the game and getting started. Digitised speech is only possible with a Sound Blaster card but, like many games, the sound is at its best when switched off. The somewhat

repetitive music can't be disabled, so it's all the sound or none, unfortunately.

Off we go with the option to start a new game or load one of eight saved games, followed by some rule options like advanced plague (sounds painful), weather and autohelp. This option displays a help screen guiding through the mechanics of the game as well as informative strategy hints the first time you carry out a particular action. It is very useful for beginners or those not familiar with the board game. ☹

'This has to be the best board game conversion I've ever seen.'

At the start of the game you get a number of nobles, offices, titles and other assets to allocate.



The computer plans its moves in a few seconds. But not always cleverly.



The computer players' nobles are shown moving.



IN PERSPECTIVE

More decision-making than *Defender Of The Crown* and without the detail of something like *Stronghold* but streets ahead in gameplay.

Kingmaker

Stronghold

Defender Of The Crown



PERCY'S PLACE

YORK

SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE

THE HOME COUNTIES

GOING ABROAD

MOTORWAYS

CORNWALL AND DEVON

WALES

ISLE OF MAN

All you need to conclude a siege is to have more men outside than there are inside.

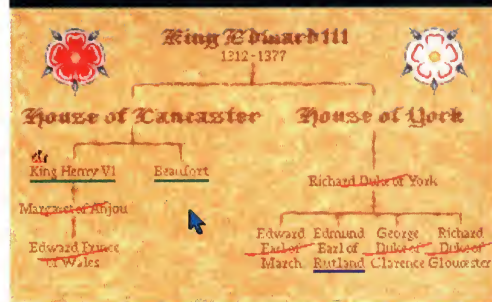
After a few games of Kingmaker and the annoying copy protection system, your specialist subject will be castles and cathedrals of England from 1450 to 1490.



The poor old King gets wiped out by the pestilence - along with scores of Dennis Publishing employees (shame).



The line of succession. Those marked in red have been, er, disposed of. If the player who holds Edmund gets him to a cathedral with an archbishop in tow, he can be crowned too.



Hardened players of the board game will notice some differences. Towns and cities are no longer safe after a plague. In the board game version once the card is turned over you know how long you've got before it is drawn again, but the computer version makes it possible for the same cities to be hit by plague on consecutive turns. The same applies to summonses and while the overall chances are the same, I've seen poor old Percy summoned five times on the trot.

The line of succession is slightly different too, with four heirs all next in line to Richard of York. Your own offices and titles can't be swapped around at Parliament either, and if you happen to enter a cathedral square with the necessary number of clerics and a suitable heir, he or she is automatically crowned. This is a pity as there are sometimes tactical disadvantages in having an heir crowned – particularly if you're hiding away in the North.

Next you can opt for any number of opponent factions from one to five. The more opponents, the harder the game as there is less opportunity to get your act together before disaster strikes. Fighting smaller, fragmented forces could prove easier, though it will certainly take longer. If you go for a lot of opponents the game is much more fun, but it can take several minutes for the computer to work through different strategies for each faction, move the pieces and resolve the combat.

Once the game is started you are shown your assets and most times you'll end up with an assortment of nobles, titles, offices, bands of mercenaries, bishops and ships. With any luck you can match them up to get a well-balanced, strong force able to capture a key Royal – perhaps even the King. After you've done, the nobles are placed in their start positions and the race is on.

Factions take it in turns (first to move depends on ownership of certain cards) and nobles with their armies can band together, lay siege to towns or castles, attack other armies in the open or set sail on ships – if they have them – to claim Royal pieces based overseas. Each piece moves five squares (or an unlimited number on a road if it's not blocked) though under the advanced weather rules this can be lower.

Automatic combat is decided by numerical odds and at least five to four odds are required for a decisive result; but you can control the action too, if you've the nerve.

Whatever the result, one or more of either sides' nobles can be killed in battle, so it's entirely possible to win a battle and still lose all your nobles. Sieges require only a larger besieging force and are more or less bound to succeed, despite some occasional weather delays.

At the start of each turn, a random event occurs. Named nobles or office holders can be called away to put down the peasants and the King can be called away to meet with various foreigners. The latter events make the sole King quite vulnerable until a good, solid band is built up. As

BATTLE SEQUENCE



☺ Nice and evenly matched. Normally this would be an indecisive battle but if you take direct control, you stand a better chance of victory.



☺ Nobles and mercenaries are deployed in position – in those days armies fought in simplistic formations mainly consisting of a centre and two wings.



☺ Each unit – archers, spearmen, men at arms, nobles and Royals – are given battle orders.



☺ They're off. Once the battle begins, it's anyone's guess who'll win. Looks like my chap's running away...

☞ some nobles and office holders are summoned more than others, many can end up quite useless, spending most of their time travelling up and down the country. The Marshall of England, for example, has 100 troops wherever he is – the trouble is he's rarely where he wants to be.

As such, the game becomes a race to concentrate and fight before your nobles are sent away again and it is this strong element of luck that actually makes it exciting. Not only do you have to battle against other factions, but you have to plan for bad breaks too. While luck may seem an odd concept in a strategy game, it doesn't detract from the fun or the gameplay at all. The computer is programmed to play each faction as a human; execute one of its nobles and it'll remember. In addition, all the nobles have their own individual character – some, like Neville, are aggressive and fight every time while others fight only if the odds are good.

There are a few problems with the game. In one game a computer-controlled noble got stuck in an endless loop trying to enter his own castle, but was repeatedly repulsed by invisible forces. Other minor bugs included some rather daft logic – one faction gave up completely and just sat in its castles while on another occasion an army of 500 men in a square with nobles from two other factions kept having to fight one, then the other and never got to the Royal piece that was attached to one of the others. Moving out of the square and then in again sorted it out, but clearly the mechanics need tightening up.

On top of some odd moves by the computer, the other bugbear is the speed. The computer player's pieces are moved around in real time and, while it does keep you informed and in control of the situation, it would be nice to be able cut short the animations with a hot key. Now and again the game can actually be a little tedious while you wait for a turn.

These problems are heavily outweighed by the accurate manual, excellent graphics and superb gameplay. This has to be the best board game conversion I've seen. Even if you've never seen the board game, the computer version is a must for all strategy fans. ☞

Think of somewhere nobody's heard of and an awful long way away – and send Percy every other turn.



Even with a Sound Blaster, you don't get the sound of splintering bone. You don't even see the gush of arterial blood. How boringly tasteful. Perhaps with virtual reality...?



When battle is won, you get to choose what happens to your prisoner. Okay, so I didn't want the Bishop of Norwich.



The end. I wonder whose castle it is? Chap in the bottom corner is called Shakespeare. Apparently he wrote a play or something...



PC ZONE score

Best board game conversion for a long, long time.

88

Price: £37.99 Out: Now
Published: US Gold
Telephone: 021 6253366

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: None specified
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5Mb
Minimum Graphics: 256 colour
VGA only
Soundcards: PC speaker, Ad-Lib,
Roland, Sound Blaster
Controls: Mouse essential

ReelMagic

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SIGMA
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"We've seen absolutely nothing like this on the PC before". PC Review - Nov '93

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Magic Boy

Spend hours chasing strange green unspeakable things through the four worlds. There is a range of beasts to recapture and send back to the basement.



After impressing the *PC Zone* staff with his conjuring tricks from the 'Paul Daniels Magic Set' he received for Christmas, it was decided that **Daniel Pemberton** would review *Empire's* newie, *Magic Boy*. Honest.



EVER SINCE A RATHER unfortunate attempt to practise my 'cutting a woman in half' routine using a potato peeler, a cardboard box and my sister, magic has had rather painful memories for me, though not as painful as for my sister.

However, the world of magic in *Magic Boy* owes more to *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* than to the latest Paul Daniels TV extravaganza. The hero, a lovable, cuddly little cutesy console-type chappie by the name of Little Hewlett (or 'Hewy' to his friends), is an apprentice wizard. He's also a bit of swot, so he often stays behind at his special 'Magic School' after all his chums have gone home to do more work and brown-nose his way to a top grade.

One evening, while still at school, Hewlett decided to have a rummage through the Grand Wizard's spell cupboard. Upon his rummaging, all the magical creatures in the cupboard decide to leg it. It doesn't take a degree in advanced alchemy for Hewlett to realise that he's up the spout without a cauldron. So he has to collect all the escaped creatures before the Grand Wizard returns in the morning. Scenarios eh?

So, you, as Hewlett, have to manoeuvre your way through four different horizontally-scrolling eight-level worlds (Sand Land, Wet World, Plastic Place and Future Zone) and locate all the escaped creatures.

Once you've found them, a couple of blasts on the fire button will release a magic spell from your wand, which stuns them. You then

pick them up (by walking into them) and send them down to the basement (by pushing Down). Having cleared all the creatures from one level, you move, in a frighteningly logical manner, onto the next. There are power-ups to aid you and traps and such-like to hinder you. If you walk into an unstunned creature or fall onto something you shouldn't have touched, like water and spikes, you lose one 'attempt' which is a goody two-shoes way of saying 'life'. Lose all your attempts and, surprise, surprise, it's game over time, unless you decide to use one of the many continues on offer.

You're probably saying to yourself, 'This sounds remarkably similar to that top game of many moons ago, *Bubble Bobble*,' and you'd be right. Although, cosmetically, the game looks and feels quite different, the basic principle is the same. Unfortunately, though, it's not nearly as good as *Bubble Bobble*.

The reasons why

Although instantly playable and initially quite appealing, the game soon palls thanks to its lack of variety. Each new level is virtually the same as the last, simply with a different layout and more monsters to capture. There are also some 'puzzles' on certain levels, but when trying to describe them, words like 'fiendish' and 'complex' don't exactly force their way to the front of your mind. Add this to the fact that the basic task of capturing the baddies isn't much fun in the first place and win city it ain't.

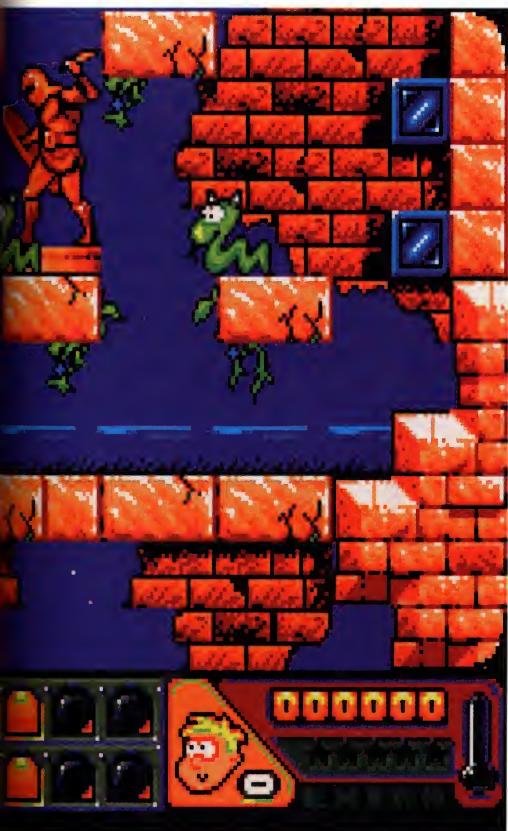
Gripe number two: once you've done a level, it's more than likely that you can do it every time, but once you've used up all your continues, you have to go back all the way

IN PERSPECTIVE

Zool

Magic Boy

Fire And Ice



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K RAM

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 12MHz

Installation: Not essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 1Mb

Minimum Graphics: CGA/EGA/VGA

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Roland, Sound Blaster

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick optional

Comments: DOS 2.0 or higher

PC ZONE score

Not very 'magic' at all.

60

Price: £25.99 Out: Now

Published: Empire

Telephone: 081 343 7337

to the start of the game, which means sitting through those super-boring earlier levels again. After about the 30th time, this gets more than a little tedious. The gap in your mind where the words 'fiendish' and 'complex' failed to appear is now filled by the phrase 'password system'. Unfortunately this phrase doesn't make it into the game. Shame really.

Moving swiftly along we get to the so-called 'level select' feature. At the start of each world you can choose to begin on any of the first four levels. If you've already completed this world before, you're going to choose level four, since you can't be bothered to sit through the other three again. But oh no, you still have to do the other levels, since you can't progress until all four are done. So all you're getting is the ability to play the levels in the order you choose. This is unbelievably frustrating.

Power to all my friends

Even the power-ups in the game are dodgy. For instance, you can pick up certain icons which enable you to shoot, say, downwards. (You normally shoot straight ahead.) These are fine for a couple of pico-seconds, especially if there's an enemy below you, but after this it's more of a hindrance than a help, as you can't shoot anything directly in front of you without performing the sort of complex moves that the Russian gymnastic squad would be proud of. Therefore, the only way to get rid of the weapon is to keep firing inanely, anywhere, until it runs out. It's the phrase 'weapon toggle' which is now vying with 'password system' for that space in your mind.



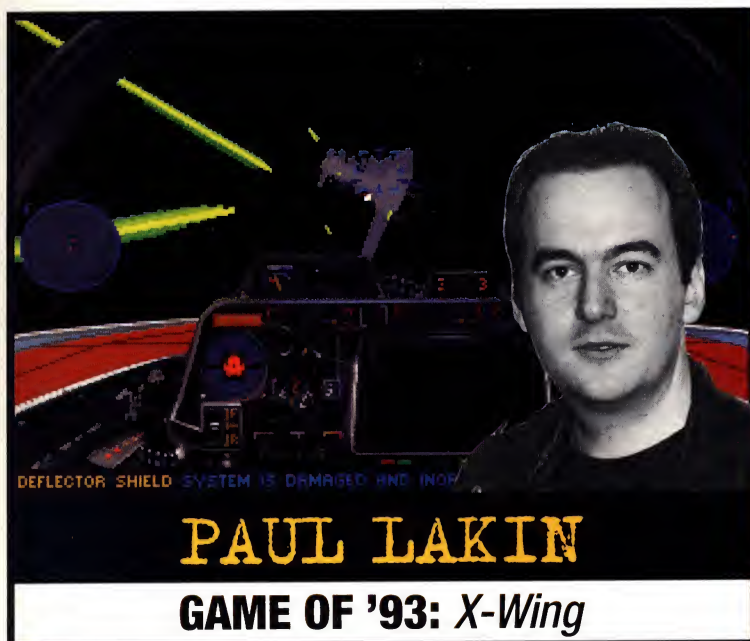
Colourfield

As you'd expect with a game whose heart lies in the world of the console, the graphics are attractive, lively and colourful. However, as so often in PC platform games the scrolling is, at times, distinctly dodgy. The sound isn't too great either. Although by definition it's almost impossible to write a pleasant, non-irritating tune for a cutesy game, you'll soon have your volume control turned right down – the main music sounds like a cross between something you'd hear on Melody Radio and the theme to *Blue Peter* played on a really cacky keyboard. The sound effects consist of an assortment of 'comedy' sounds and your average whizzes and bangs.

Having said all this, *Magic Boy* is actually good fun to play for a while – it just doesn't keep you gasping for more. It also comes bundled (or rather squeezed onto a disk) with *Cool Crocs* – an older game which is also, rather embarrassingly, considerably better. It's obviously aimed at a younger gamesplayer, but they're already served by a whole host of much better console games. On the PC even though there is less competition, there still aren't that many outstanding games. Platform games can work on the PC and there's no reason why *Magic Boy* shouldn't – its weaknesses are more to do with game design than programming. However, in the end, it's more irritating than addictive. There are 60 levels so there's no lack of durability, but if you can stand to do the same levels over and over again you've either got great willpower or a very small games selection. Zool it is not. **Z**

Game '93

Well, another year is over. It's time to reflect, look back and put everything into perspective. 1993 has been the year that PC games really led the way, rather than following. It's also been the year that CD showed the first sign of realising its potential, and why not? We take a look at our personal favourites and invite you to tell us all about yours.



DEFLECTOR SHIELD SYSTEM IS DAMAGED AND INOP

PAUL LAKIN
GAME OF '93: *X-Wing*

FOR ONCE a game that lives up to all the hype and anticipation. *X-Wing* is the sort of game you show to your friends to convince them how good PC games are. Its stunning graphics match beauty with smooth speed, while the sound is capable of reducing grown men to tears of joy. High on fun, excitement, challenge and atmosphere, *X-Wing* set the pace early in the year and was never really overtaken.

The Best Of The Rest:

STRONGHOLD The game I played most this year. A really engrossing mix of *Sim City* and *Castles*.
SPACE HULK I never thought I'd fall for a board game conversion. Loud, aggressive and exciting with just enough tactics to convince yourself

that you aren't hooked on mindless violence.

SEAL TEAM A pale shadow of the game it might have been, *Seal Team* is still a strong enough idea to be great fun to play. In the end it is saved by the atmosphere created by music and sound effects.

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER '93 This is still the best football management game with more depth and realism than any of its competitors.

Tip For The Top In '94:

PACIFIC STRIKE I wasn't a great fan of *Strike Commander* but *Pacific Strike*, by using the SC engine, enhancing it, putting it in a much more suitable scenario and tying it round a storyline that allows you to influence the outcome of the war, looks set to be a classic flight sim.

A VERY WELL put-together strategy/combat game. It has the huge advantage of being a totally open game for which anyone can design new star systems, missions, ships and opponents. Don't be put off by the complexity of the screens, although *ROE* needs a lot of work at first, once you have grasped all the procedures and systems, it really does reward that effort. *ROE* is a great game in its own right, but if you want more depth and complexity, you can always hook it up to *Breach 2*, another superb Omnitrend game.

The Best Of The Rest:

FRONTIER: ELITE II Another heady mix of strategy and combat which you could theoretically play for

years without repetition. Easily worthy of its pedigree, this well-crafted space opera is dangerously addictive if you have patience with it initially.

BUZZ ALDRIN'S RACE INTO SPACE Ignore accusations that it is an animated spreadsheet; this game really captures the excitement of the space race.

STUNT ISLAND A game unlike any other; be cameraman, director, editor and stuntman.

MICROSOFT ARCADE FOR WINDOWS Sad, I know, but what a relaxing wallow in nostalgia.

Tip For The Top In '94:

DOOM To have so much riding on it, let's hope they salvage their reputation after the terrible *Spear Of Destiny* debacle.



MARK BURGESS
GAME OF '93: *Rules Of Engagement II*

OKAY, so it came out at the end of 1992 and I'd completed the brilliantly written full-blown strategy part before 1993 even got under way. However, for the whole of this year, the *Star Control Super Melee* game (the two-player head-to-head option) has been played nightly in the PC Zone office. It's quite simply the best two-player game available for the PC. Yes, *Star Control II* gets my 1993 vote, my 1992 vote and may even be loitering around to grab my 1994 vote as well.

The Best Of The Rest:

STUNT ISLAND You can set stunts up, fly them, film them from eight different camera angles, pop into the editing suite and then bore friends senseless with the results.

TORNADO A bloody bastard serious flight sim. The only thing missing is the popping sound your eyes would make after pulling negative three gs for a moment too long.

X-WING The chances of this being duff were slim. And it wasn't. The graphics and sound made you feel like you were in the film and the pick up and go' playability was an absolute treat.

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD II Not quite as good as the first game, but a fab RPG which offered total freedom and months of playing time.

Tip For The Top In '94:

PACIFIC STRIKE It's going to be *Aces Of The Pacific* with texture bitmapping, guru shading, good flight models and a full, interactive storyline. Wahay, I can't wait.

...would make any other horrible death seem like big fun by comparison.

• I'm sure you'd feel a lot safer if you were with us. Come on, Fwiffo, join our fleet!

DUNCAN MacDONALD

GAME OF '93: *Star Control II*



PATRICK MCCARTHY

GAME OF '93: *Sam And Max*

WE took a chance in heralding this as the game of the year way back in the spring and I still think we were right. It's rare that a licensed game turns out to be such a classic and this one is a real treat. It's also unusual to come across such a finely-balanced mix of strategy and action and as for tension and atmosphere, nothing else released this year even comes close.

The Best Of The Rest:

X-WING The definitive space-based shoot 'em-up. How can any *Star Wars* addict resist X-Wings, Darth Vader and the Death Star in one package? This one is destined to run and run.

DUNE (CD-ROM version) A very good strategy game is raised to

excellence with the addition of voices, extra animation and clips from the David Lynch movie.

SHADOW OF THE COMET Although the engine used in this graphic adventure leaves a lot to be desired, the story is first class and perfectly captures the spirit of Lovecraft.

THE LOST VIKINGS I'm a sucker for action puzzle games and this one has more appeal than most.

Tip For The Top In '94:

PRISONER OF ICE The sequel to *Shadow Of The Comet* is being given a sophisticated, souped-up graphics engine and it's based on my favourite Lovecraft work, *The Mountains Of Madness*. Given Infogrames' ability at constructing a great plot, I'm certain this is going to be a winner.

Based on the characters from the popular comic books, *Sam and Max* may look like it's aimed at younger players, but its attitude, humour and occasional use of naughty language proves otherwise. The game has you journeying through the tacky tourist traps of the US with freelance police Sam the dog and his psychotic sidekick, Max, the large fanged rabbit, in their quest to find Bruno the escaped Bigfoot and Trixie the giraffe-necked girl. Hours of fun to be had by all

The Best Of The Rest:

X-WING One of those dangerous types of game that caused people with no social lives around here to have even less of one (not that they're the types to worry).

FLASHBACK A kind of cyberpunk *Prince Of Persia* with outstanding animation of the central character, big levels and lots of people and cyborgs to shoot.

INDYCAR RACING Equals *Grand Prix* in gameplay, with superb graphics and no Nigel Mansell. Yo, whoop, whoop, etc.

NHL HOCKEY Fast-moving, graphically excellent ice hockey game. One of the few sports games to get it right on the PC. Shame they took the fighting out.

Tip For The Top In '94:

DOOM Tense, nervous headache? Try annihilating your neighbours with chain saws, rocket launchers and the almost mythical GFX5000 to banish those migraine blues. *Ultima Underworld* for the impatient.



LAURENCE SCOTFORD

GAME OF '93: *Space Hulk*



DAVID McCANDLESS

GAME OF '93: *Star Control II*

THIS STILL remains, and will for ever and ever amen, a permanent fixture on the office hard drives. It doesn't just come with easily the best two-player combat game on any platform (16 ships with different guns, 'special weapons' and handling characteristics), but also one of the best written, witty, involving, captivating, playable and excellent space-trading, exploring, combat game in the world.

The Best Of The Rest:

SPACE HULK Intimidating. Bowel-loosening. Frightening. All the adjectives you usually attach to Margaret Thatcher, you can also attach to strategy RPG *Space Hulk*. **ULTIMA UNDERWORLD II** Glorious texture-mapped fantasy romp, with

a very politically correct story line. And trolls.

LANDS OF LORE It stands up as a towering erect phallic memorial to the legacy of *Dungeon Master*. It's got trolls too.

X-WING Exhilarating space combat game. Fastest graphics, best sound, most challenging story-driven gameplay and the worst Darth Vader impression in the galaxy. No trolls but a nice line in Wookies.

Tip For The Top In '94:

DOOM This will be, without a shadow of a doubt, the game of 1994. Combining elements of *Wolfenstein*, *Space Hulk*, *Aliens*, and *Ultima Underworld II*, even in its incomplete Beta form, *Doom* is, quite frankly, the most exciting game I have played for years.

A STRATEGY GAME with its fair share of arcade-style blasting, all the elements add up: dripping with atmosphere, constantly challenging and crammed with real tactical teasers. The graphics were also pretty atmospheric, although it would be nice to see better cut-scene animations. The only real problems are an irritating bug that causes the game to think your sergeants have been killed when they haven't and a manual that leaves too much for you to work out for yourself.

The Best Of The Rest:

INDYCAR RACING Twice as good as *F1GP* already. If it had come out a bit earlier in the year, it might have beaten *Space Hulk* to the chequered flag.

X-WING A variety of missions, superb graphics and sound. Slightly more story, less combat and easier missions and it would be just right for my palate

TORNADO From a few day's play it's on top of the list of games to take off the shelf and go back to when the upgrade comes out

PINBALL DREAMS I only play it when I can bear the thought of getting past the bloody copy protection. But it's dead playable.

Tip For The Top In '94:

HARPOON II I was a total *Harpoon* junkie, so the sequel looks mouth-watering. Unfortunately, past experience would suggest it'll be 1996 before 360 iron all the bugs out, even if they release it on time in '94.



TIM PONTING

GAME OF '93: *Space Hulk*



GAMES OF '93

Archer Maclean's Pool – Virgin Interactive
(Issue 2; 87%)
Battlechess 4000 – Interplay
(Issue 2; 81%)
The Complete Chess System – Kompart UK
(Issue 1; 80%)

Dark Sun: Shattered Lands – SSI/US Gold
(Issue 9; 83%)
Dune II – Virgin Interactive
(Issue 1; 89%)
Fields Of Glory – MicroProse
(Issue 6; 89%)
Flashback – Delphine/US Gold
(Issue 6; 89%)
Freddy Pharkas – Sierra On-Line
(Issue 4; 85%)
Front Page Sports Football Pro – Dynamix
(Issue 9; 85%)
Innocent Until Caught – Psygnosis
(Issue 10; 84%)
James Pond 2 – Millennium
(Issue 5; 87%)
Kasparov's Gambit – Electronic Arts
(Issue 9; 85%)
Lemmings 2: The Tribes – Psygnosis
(Issue 1; 88%)

The Lost Vikings – Interplay
(Issue 7; 80%)
Maniac Mansion 2: Day Of The Tentacle – LucasArts/US Gold
(Issue 6; 85%)
Microsoft Arcade For Windows – Microsoft
(Issue 8; 87%)
Network Q RAC Rally 2 – Europress Software
(Issue 10; 80%)
Prince Of Persia 2: The Shadow And The Flame – Brøderbund/Electronic Arts
(Issue 5; 89%)
Protostar – Tsunami/Accolade
(Issue 5; 80%)
Ringworld – Tsunami/Accolade
(Issue 2; 80%)
Serpent Isle: Ultima VII Part 2 – Origin
(Issue 3; 89%)
Shadow Of The Comet – Infogrames
(Issue 2; 87%)

Simon The Sorcerer – Adventuresoft UK
(Issue 7; 86%)
Solitaire's Journey – QQP/Mirage
(Issue 8; 87%)
Street Fighter II – US Gold
(Issue 9; 81%)
Stronghold – SSI/US Gold
(Issue 8; 80%)
Stunt Island – Infogrames
(Issue 1; 82%)
V For Victory 3: Market Garden – Three Sixty Pacific/Electronic Arts
(Issue 4; 82%)
War In The Gulf – Empire
(Issue 5; 81%)
Where In Space Is Carmen Sandiego? – Brøderbund/Electronic Arts
(Issue 4; 85%)
X-Wing – LucasArts/US Gold
(Issue 2; 88%)
Zool – Gremlin
(Issue 2; 85%)



a 16-bit sound card and double-speed CD-ROM drive!



Now it's your turn to sort out the wheat from the chaff, and possibly win yourself a very tasty bit of multimedia kit into the bargain. All you have to do is fill in this page, or a photocopy of it, answer the simple

question at the bottom of the page and send it to us. We'll be announcing the winners of each category in the April 1994 issue and presenting the awards at the 1994 European Computer Trade Show in London at the beginning of April.

Orchid Multimedia Kit

The first correct entry drawn from the hat will win an Orchid Soundwave 32 and an Orchid CDS-3110 double-speed CD-ROM drive worth £199 apiece.

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GAMES OF '93

Betrayal At Krondor –
Dynamix

(Issue 5; 91%)

Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space –
Electronic Arts

(Issue 2; 90%)

Flight Simulator 5.0 – Microsoft
(Issue 8; 90%)

Frontier: Elite II – Gametek
(Issue 9; 95%)

IndyCar Racing – Virgin Interactive
(Issue 10; 93%)

Lands Of Lore – Virgin Interactive
(Issue 7; 90%)

NHL Hockey – Electronic Arts
(Issue 7; 91%)

Return To Zork – Activision
(Issue 10; 90%)

Rules Of Engagement 2 –
Omnitrend/Impressions
(Issue 7; 91%)

Space Hulk – Electronic Arts
(Issue 4; 90%)

Syndicate – Bullfrog/Electronic Arts
(Issue 5; 90%)

Tornado – Digital Integration
(Issue 6; 93%)

**Ultima Underworld II: Labyrinth Of
Worlds** – Origin
(Issue 1; 94%)

How to vote

In each of the categories below you should write the name of a game and the company that publishes it. If you do not wish to vote in a particular category, then please leave the space blank. The programs you vote for must have been released in 1993.

Best Adventure:

Best Strategy/Wargame:

Best Action Game:

Best Simulation:

Best Role-Playing Game:

Best Licensed Product:

Best Games Hardware:

Best Packaging:

Most Original Concept:

Best Soundtrack:

Best Graphics:

Best Gameplay:

Best Edutainment Product:

Best Games Publisher:

Best Game Developer:

Best CD Game:

Best Disk-Based Game:

The Question

An Orchid is:

- ☐ (1) A rare sea creature related to the octopus
- ☐ (2) A rare wild flower
- ☐ (3) A rare Tibetan delicacy

*Tick correct box

NAME:

ADDRESS:

DAYTIME TEL:

Please send your completed form to Game '93, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, SW1P 7HJ.

RULES

1. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
2. Employees of Dennis Publishing or Orchid (Europe) Ltd are not eligible to entry
3. All entries must be received by February 4 1994.
4. Purchase of PC Zone is not necessary to enter. For a free entry to this compo, send a stamped SAE to Game '93 Free Entry, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ.



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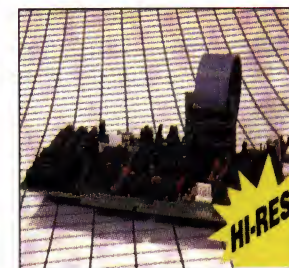
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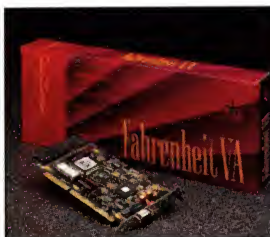
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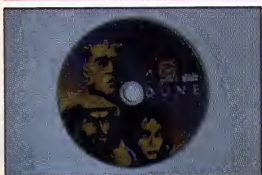


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CD-ROM

REVIEW

As the CD-ROM market goes into overdrive CD-ROM Review checks its wing mirror, drops down into third gear and pulls into the fast lane, narrowly missing a BMW full of Image Consultants. Shame.



LucasArts in another good game shock. **Paul Presley** has the story as well as the CD and he's not giving it back – ever!

LIES. UTTER falsehoods I tell you. Whenever a magazine or journalist tells you that they don't consider the graphics to be the most important factor in a game, they are lying. Through their teeth. Through my teeth. I have said it in the past myself and I know now that not only was I leading you up the garden path, I was taking you into the front hallway and through to the kitchen for a quick fabrication and biscuits.

The proof of this is *Rebel Assault*, the latest CD romp from LucasArts, and a game that actually has very little in the way of deep gameplay but is presented in such a fashion that it is certain to get accolades from just about every PC games magazine currently in print.

Rebel Assault

(Right) In an emergency statement today, Ministers denied that underinvestment in the Imperial transport system was leading to overcrowding or a decline in safety standards.





There are a number of ways to describe it: *X-Wing* on heat; what *Wing Commander* wanted to be; a real interactive movie (although I have my own views on this – see the panel). There are also a number of ways to approach it. Three in fact, and I'll attempt to cater for each of them over the following pages.

But first, the game

Yes, to start with I'd best describe the game. Taking the main action segments from the first two movies (and if you haven't seen the *Star Wars* trilogy then I'm not going to explain the plot here. Stop reading, go and rent them, then come back and carry on when you're done), *Rebel*

Assault removes all traces of the film's heroes and carefully weaves the plot to centre around you and your buddies in Blue Squadron.

You start with a few training missions at various secret Rebel outposts before moving on to the ice world of Hoth to battle Imperial Walkers, and finally scooting out to Yavin and making an attack run against the mighty Death Star. *Rebel Assault* mixes film-like storytelling with arcade action, creating a game that is true to the *Star Wars* ethos in every way bar the backwardly-scrolling message at the start.

To go into detail about the plot would deprive you of half of the enjoyment to be gained from the product. Suffice to say that between each level (or chapter as the game calls them) the story is told using superb animations, digitised film footage and truly breathtaking sound and music taken straight from the films. The other thing is that whereas most games save all the best graphics for these animated rewards, *Rebel Assault* makes the most use of the CD by keeping the film-quality visuals throughout the action segments.

It's here that I back up my accusations about graphics affecting the way we see the game. The fact that the actual game segments are fairly limited is practically overlooked simply because of the way it's presented. That and the fact that it is *Star Wars* of course. If this had been set in the *Wing Commander* universe I really don't think any of us would be half as impressed.

The action junkie

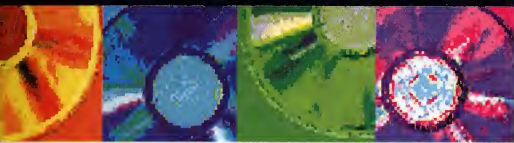
Which seems as good a place as any to introduce the first of our categories tonight (Sandra, the curtain if you'd please): the action junkie. Do you fit into this category? A simple test. When you loaded *Elite II* for the first time, was your immediate action on starting at Ross 154 to push the fire button and bring on the police? Yes? You're an action junkie. You prefer *Wing Commander II* to *Elite II*, *Comanche* to *Tornado* and your ideal night out would be a trip to see *Demolition Man* followed by a few quick bursts at your local Quasar emporium.

Rebel Assault would be considered by some quarters to be the perfect action game. It's fast, loud, simple to use and you can play it without looking at the manual. Plus there are superb 'reward' sections between each level and, of course, it's set in one of the classic action universes. *Rebel Assault* was born to be



(Left) An exclusive excerpt from the Hollywood School Of Scriptwriters entrance examination paper. Write a script that links the following pictures together in a moderately coherent way before cutting to a fight/chase in the next scene. (Above) In a radical new approach to environmentalism, the Green Party launch a pre-emptive strike against Thorp reprocessing plant in an X-Wing fighter.





TECHNICAL ALERT!

A small point, but one worth noting, is that I experienced an alarming problem with *Rebel Assault* when attempting to run it through an older version of the Sound Blaster. For some reason it would not accept my FlightStick through the game port on the Sound Blaster and the only way I could play the game with the stick was to turn the music off. Check with US Gold's technical support staff if you feel you might have the same problem.

Deadly they are, stable they ain't. Hadn't the empire heard of wheels?



'Between each level the story is told using superb animations, digitised film footage and truly breathtaking sound and music taken straight from the films.'



a coin-op machine. We must count ourselves fortunate that the infant was swapped at birth and found its way into the loving arms of Mr and Mrs CD-ROM instead.

Those of you who spend so much time in your local arcade that you know the attendants by their Christian names and consider your home to be a place you just visit occasionally to get some more cash, will possibly find it a little too easy; but then I suspect the only thing that could really provide you with a challenge would be that strange thing called schoolwork that occasionally crops up in your life. Let's just say that a friend of mine, who I consider to be a fairly expert arcadester (as I believe is the term employed by those in the know), couldn't get past chapter six on the easiest setting. Also, as is the case with most arcade-style games, it has that replayable factor to it. So it's a major thumbs-up from the arcade fraternity.

The 'serious' PC gamer

This is a thorny debate, right up there with the gravel or newspaper for the cat's litter tray argument. *Rebel Assault* versus *X-Wing*. On the one hand you have a fast-moving, beautifully-presented space shoot 'em-up that tells a full story set in the *Star Wars* universe; on the other hand you have four fingers and a thumb (I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. That was thoroughly uncalled for. I have no idea what came over me. Such weak jovialities are simply not worthy of your attention. Sorry, sorry, sorry...). On the other hand, you have an in-depth simulation of life in the *Star Wars* universe that allows you to divert power from the engine to your shields.

As a rule, I consider myself to be quite a serious gamer. I have no time for annoyances like *Street Fighter II*, *Sensible Soccer* et al. and would much rather curl up in front of the CPU's fire and lose myself in a few hours of *Elite II* or *Day Of The Tentacle*. However, I have been unable to draw myself away from *Rebel Assault*'s flirtatious charms lately and I've a feeling that after

BEGONE YOU AND ALL YOUR PLATFORM FRIPPERY

The words 'interactive' and 'movie' are two that have been used many times in the past year or so, but it is only with *Rebel Assault* that their true meaning becomes as clear. There has been a lot of talk recently of Full Motion Video cards and CD-V (Compact Disc Video) technology that can play full video imagery and digital sound. Phillips' CD-i machine is to be re-released next year with a built-in FMV card and those in the know are predicting that this is where films on CD will take off.

But surely a compact disc capable of storing video information is also capable of storing CD-ROM data? If so, does this mean we could see the film and the game industries merging properly for the first time? Think about this scenario: an FMV-supporting CD machine capable of playing both games and CD films; *Star Wars* is released and on the same disc you have the data for *Rebel Assault*.

But let's go a step further. As well as being able to either watch the film or play the game, how about being able to watch the film *and* play the game. Replace the plot segments from *Rebel Assault* with the actual film data from *Star Wars* and whenever an action sequence crops up in the film the viewer is given the choice to just continue to watch passively or to take part, interactively, playing a *Rebel Assault*-style section that's been tailored to fit the film. Hey presto, the first true interactive movie.

PC ZONE
score

It's Star Wars.
It's also the most
important CD-ROM
game to date.

93

Price: £49.99 Out: Now
Published: US Gold/LucasArts
Telephone: 021 625 3366

PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 386DX
Minimum Speed: 33MHz
Installation: Optional
Minimum Hard Disk: 193 bytes
(yes, bytes)
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Gravis, Aria, Sound
Blaster, Sound Blaster Pro,
MediaVision PAS
Controls: Mouse, Joystick

all the hi-techness that *X-Wing* was able to offer, every now and then you just need to sit down and let your inhibitions loose and go totally wild.

Many was the time I would be sitting around on a Sunday afternoon, waiting patiently for the delightful comedy-drama of that irrepressible rogue, Lovejoy, to arrive on my TV and, since I am allergic to *The Clothes Show* and *One Man And His Dog*, I would find myself wishing I could just turn on my PC and play something mindless to fill the long hours. We all need that release and *Rebel Assault* perfectly fits the ticket's bill.

The technophile

Consider the future. Not the 'rocketships in the backyard and personal translocation podules' future but just one or two years from now. I have a single-speed CD-ROM drive which means that the maximum level of interaction in a CD-ROM game open to me is that of *Rebel Assault*. Plenty of room for animations and graphic files, but just enough disk-accessing time to allow for simple arcade-style games. Anything beyond that would be somewhat slow and unwieldy and a serious detriment to the enjoyment factor.

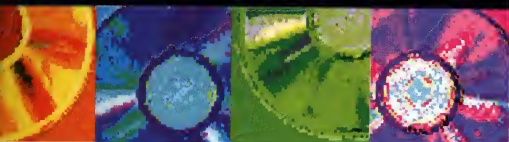
I look at *Rebel Assault*, though, and I see so much more going on behind it. Imagine what LucasArts could have done if they hadn't been limited to supporting the likes of me. Take a triple-speed drive as a minimum spec and you'd get the depth and gameplay of *X-Wing* with the speed and graphics of *Rebel Assault*. It's for both this reason and the one I've outlined in the panel accompanying this text that I consider *Rebel Assault* to be the most important step in CD-ROM gaming so far. *King's Quest VI* and *The Labyrinth Of Time* show how the adventure genre could benefit from CDs, *Microcosm* and *The Lawnmower Man* are exercises in graphics and *The 7th Guest* was useful for opening people's eyes, but *Rebel Assault*, with all of its interactive movie qualities, is an indication of what lies ahead for the gaming industry as a whole. If that isn't important then I will eat every hat in the millinery section of Harrods.

And so to the score

I really feel that *Rebel Assault*, apart from being a damn good blast, is an extremely significant step in gaming history and my mark reflects this. I can see what will happen to those of you who just concern yourselves with the day-to-day events of the gaming world though. Remember when the Amiga was the dominant figure? There was *Kick Off 2*, the most playable association football game to be found. Then came *Sensible Soccer* and the gaming world was split forever. Just as the Muslims fought with the Arabs, just as Pepsi fought with Coca Cola and just as *Eastenders* fought with *Coronation Street*, so the Sensis fought with the Kickers. We're going to see the same here. *X-Wingers* versus the *Rebels*. At least this is an important fight, though. (I'm beginning to realise just how Salman Rushdie feels - I can only hope my beloved editor feels the need to edit that first analogy. Death threats from fundamentalists are just the things to really screw up your Sunday afternoon.) To close though, I would like to ask a question. Can it really be a mere coincidence that two of the galaxy's greatest heroes, Luke Skywalker and Nigel Mansell, both go by the callsign Red Five? **Z**



(Right) In another PC Zone exclusive we bring you the highlights of the Space-U-Like summer brochure, with some lovely pictures of their top resorts. Mind you, the swimming pool is still under construction.



The Labyrinth Of Time



Despite using his patented 'Universal Maze Solver' (pick a wall and follow it all the way around until you reach the exit), **Paul Presley** still got hopelessly lost in EA's new CD-ROM adventure. 'That's the trouble with pan-dimensional labyrinths,' he later told reporters, 'no edges'.



REMEMBER A TIME when the inclusion of any kind of graphic in an adventure game was held to be sacrilege. No adventure game could be considered 'true' unless it contained white text on a black background and required a 'Go North' prompt from the player at regular intervals. Nowadays, if you even so much as have to type in your name on the 'saved game' roster, an adventure is jeered at and has stones cast upon it. Reading text is even worse. Why engage our brains when a brightly-coloured animation segment can do all that tedious imagination work for us? And now, with the advent of compact discs and digitised voices we don't even need text when characters speak. Strabismus sufferers no longer need to focus on tiny graphic fonts since we can hear all there is to know (although where this leaves the sonically-challenged sections of the populace is anyone's guess).

'But this is a good thing,' you cry and so you should, for it means technology is pressing ever onwards and we are rapidly approaching that fabled day when we just plug a wire straight into our brains and become Michelle Pfeiffer or Burt Reynolds in an action-packed adventure of our own while sitting like a vegetable in our living rooms.

So why then is the biggest fault of Electronic Arts' CD-based time-travel adventure a lack of text? Simply because the graphic illustrations are too good. I will guarantee that 90 percent of the time you spend in *The Labyrinth Of Time* will be taken up pointing at things on the screen, saying: 'What in the name of Jim Bowen is that?' and rather more frequently, 'Will someone tell me what the blazes is going on?'.

'I see,' said the blind man

The programmers, in their infinite wisdom, thoughtfully included an eyeball icon, presumably (and I use the word since I was unable to prove the fact through the course of the game) to look at items. Apart from providing a nice close-up of certain areas (which merely allows you to get a closer look at



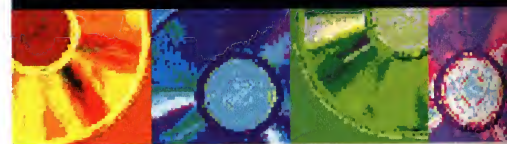
What is this strange object I see before me? Could it be the Hubble telescope, replete with its corrective contact lenses? Or maybe even the Thames barrier? Or could it be the latest exhibit for the Tate?



Oh for the wings of a mythical beast! I bet Claire Rayner's jealous! What she wouldn't do to get her hands on some wings like these.

'I will guarantee that 90 percent of the time you spend in *The Labyrinth Of Time* will be taken up pointing at things on the screen, saying: 'What in the name of Jim Bowen is that?'





PC ZONE score

Beautiful, alluring, a touch slow and a little fussy. A quite superb adventure though.

89

Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549442

something indeterminable), I was left none the wiser as to what I was viewing. 'Text!' I was screaming. 'Give me some text. Tell me what this strange blue thing with protruding knobs and an assortment of covered alcoves is, for I never have and most likely never will encounter one in my non-computing journeys.' It was an arduous task and no mistake.

Masturbation for the senses

Apart from this lack of understanding and a less than user-friendly (as I believe is the term employed by more fashionable reviewers than I) interface – far too many mouse clicks to do far too few things – I was remarkably impressed by this chronological oddity. The visuals, apart from their identifiable obscurity and a lack of smooth-scrolling *The 7th Guest* style movement, are superb. Quite the finest illustrations outside of the British Museum's Renaissance art section. And the sound! Such vibrance, such tonality, the tunes ranged through a multitude of musical eras, from *Twin Peaks* to *The Prisoner* and back via *Captain Scarlet* and *Beethoven's Ninth*. Both audio and visual material combine to produce an atmosphere unrivalled in an adventure game since the aforementioned *The 7th Guest*.

The plot, too, is above average for an American computer adventure, devoid as it is of an overabundance of cliché and unconvincing conversation that is too often the downfall of a potentially good game. You play the part of an average Joe (or Jake since we start in the States), bored of your everyday routine and bordering on the suicidal. This is told, rather nicely I thought, in a striking monochrome introductory sequence, until the arrival of a time-travelling warrior infuses colour into your life, recruiting you (being the nearest mortal being he could find) on a quest to negotiate a time and space-spanning labyrinth – built by an evil tyrant of no uncertain magical ability – with the intent of destroying it before it can be used as a conquering gateway for said villain.

The fact that this maze consists not of a series of garden shrubbery or underground caverns, but is made up of 1920s hotels, wild west towns and disused cinemas (to name but a few of the locales) lends the game the kind of surrealism usually reserved for 60s/70s television shows in the vein of *Sapphire And Steel* and *The Prisoner*. To me this says quality and it says it with guts and verve.

Verdictum in toto

Look beyond the initial flaws and find an absorbing game. If marketing companies were capable of telling truths, then this would be the legend emblazoned across the box and I for one would pay money for such a slogan (although not the 40 pounds required as this is just another example of the abhorrent overpricing seen in our industry today. 20 pounds and no more, sir. Try haggling with your local shopkeepers; they may just be surprised enough for you to get away with it). Step briskly over the flick-screening, trip lightly around the control system and skip merrily through the obscurity to engage the best and most beautiful CD-ROM adventure so far. (I should write press releases for a living. I'm a natural.)



A rather smart juke-box. In the words of the immortal Rod Stewart: 'Let's listen to some of your old Motown records...'



But just who is alive? Gordon? Cockles and mussels? Emma Forbes and Andi Peters? Who knows?

IN PERSPECTIVE

There seem to be more and more CD-ROM adventures appearing every day. *Labyrinth* is currently the best of a very mixed bunch, with titles like *Kings Quest VI* coming in close behind. *The 7th Guest* proved to be something of a limited step in the right direction. *Blue Force* just illustrates the dangers of 'shovelware'.

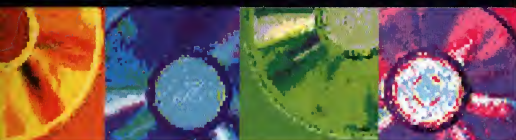
Blue Force CD

King's Quest VI

The Labyrinth Of Time

The 7th Guest





Critical Path



SPENDING AROUND watching full motion video clips, reading a few pages of a notebook and making the odd mouse-click here and there is not my idea of an interactive adventure. Media Vision will no doubt disagree with me on that one, as is evident from *Critical Path*.

The game is set in a post-apocalyptic world, where heroine Kat finds herself stranded after her helicopter crash-lands on the roof of an island complex. The player must guide Kat through General Minh's abandoned factory and get her to the helipad where she can fly away to safety.



Come on Kat, this is no time to hang about.

The game is played in a control room where you see Kat's actions on a monitor. Each level starts with Kat wandering about and coming a cropper in some way. You can prevent these accidents by working out what switch on the factory control panel to press at the right time or by activating one of the traps.

Solving the puzzles is not a problem as Minh has left his notebook full of clues. As you read his memoirs you will come across such cryptic teasers as 'I typed in the number of Satan and blew them all to bits'. If you can't work that one out, adventure games are not for you.

Once you've worked out what to do, you simply wait for the appropriate moment in the video scene and flick the switch. The only time in the whole game that you get involved in the proceedings is in the catwalk scene when you guide Kat to safety by telling her to go left, right or forward etc. or she'll plunge to her doom.

Despite the excellent graphics and atmospheric soundtrack, I still felt a bit conned with this game. It's too easy and at 50 quid for the privilege, you're bound to end up feeling a bit ripped off. Do yourself a favour and go for something like *Day Of The Tentacle* which has a longer shelf-life. *Chris Anderson*

Slick and atmospheric but way too short.



specs Min. Memory: 4Mb
Min. Processor: 386SX
Min. Speed: 33MHz Installation: Essential
Min. Hard Disk Space: 6.3Mb Min. Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported: 8-bit Windows compatible Controls: Mouse, Keyboard,
Comments: Needs Windows 3.1. Runs in TrueColor.

Price: £49.99 Out: Now Publisher: Media Vision Telephone: 081 563 2222

Advantage Tennis



KAY, LET'S NOT beat about the bush: if you're going to convert a disk-based game to CD-ROM, make sure it's bloody good to start with. Failing that, stuff it with incredible sound effects and tart it up with a stirring, bastard-groovy music. Given the aforementioned criteria, *Advantage Tennis* just doesn't get off the starting block.

The original version was nothing to shout about. Dull, uninspiring gameplay and lacklustre graphics presented the player with a profoundly mundane sports sim. This version boasts a short CD music track for the intro (whoopee!), enhanced sound effects for the match and an umpire who announces the scores in an irritating French accent. Apart from that it turns out to be a poor man's *Pro Tennis Tour 2*.

All the usual stuff you'd expect from a tennis sim is here: training, exhibition and tournament modes, one or two player options and a variety of surfaces are all included. You start with a ranking of 100 then take part in tournaments around the globe in the hope of winning lots of cash, improving your rating and eventually taking the number one spot.

Slightly less usual is the slow-motion action-replay option. This gives you the opportunity to take another look at that melodramatic sideways dive that just clinched the match, or check out that decidedly controversial line-call that convinced you the umpire is of questionable parentage.

The only real plus points the CD version has over the original are the quite-decent-really sound effects and the extra cities to play in, but ultimately the game still suffers from a distinct lack of excitement. There are much better sports sims than this around and if you really want a game of tennis, you're better off with *Pro Tennis Tour 2*. *Chris Anderson*

Unexciting tennis game that lacks punch.



specs Min. Memory: 2Mb
(580K base ram free)
Min. Processor: 386 Min. Speed: 25MHz
Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk Space:
1.6Mb Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards
Supported: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib Controls:
Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

Price: £35.99 Out: Now Publisher: Infogrames Tel: 071 738 8199

Whoops! Hit that one too hard and you may wake up the crowd.





Who forgot to put the cutlery on the table then?

Alone In The Dark



FIND IT VERY difficult to talk about *Alone in the Dark* without lapsing into an

unashamed eulogy on the qualities of the game and how ground-breaking it is. But since I'm not the only reviewer who is

utterly and hopelessly enamoured of the game, and since you will have heard it all half a dozen times before, I'll be good and deny myself the pleasure.

If you haven't heard of *Alone In The Dark*, I'll take it that you're new to PC games. It's a 3D arcade adventure loosely based on the works of H. P. Lovecraft. Playing either private investigator Edward Carnby or legatee Emily Hartwood, your task is to enter the mysterious old house, Decerto, to uncover the facts behind the strange death of the reclusive Jeremy Hartwood. While exploring the house, you come across more than you bargained for.

The revolutionary use of multiple 'camera angles' for each room, strange perspective and eerie music give this game about ten times more atmosphere than anything else I've played (oops, here I go again). Essentially, this is the same game as the floppy disk version, even down to the occasional minor graphics glitch. As a bonus though, Infogrames has included a mini game, *Jack In The Dark* featuring a little girl, Grace, one of the stars of *Alone In The Dark 2*. This is (a) really cute, and (b) seasonal, so it's bound to have been a big hit over Christmas. *Laurence Scotford*

Still the best thing since sliced bread. Buy it.



specs Min. Memory: 2Mb
Min. Processor: 386
Min. Speed: 20MHz Installation: Essential
Min. Hard Disk Space: 7.5Mb Min. Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Disney Sound Source, Sound Master+, Voice Master II Controls: Keyboard only Comments: Requires MSCDEX 2.2

Price: £44.99 Out: Now Publisher: Infogrames Tel: 071 738 8199

Capitol Hill



THIS IS ANOTHER addition to the ever-growing range of edutainment programs from Software Toolworks and they don't come any more heavyweight than this one. *Capitol Hill* gives you the opportunity to go to

Washington as a freshman member of congress and work your way up the political ladder to become president of the United States.

If you're looking for a spot of light entertainment, without having to imbibe too much information, then you may as well stop reading right here. It's impossible to make any progress in this game without becoming an authority on the history and structure of congress, house rules and procedures.

Your entry into the house starts with the traditional swearing-in ceremony. Once the formalities are out of the way,

you are invited to choose your own office and staff and jump into the political hot seat to organise the day-to-day running of your affairs. This is where you get to do lots of fun things like taking phone calls from corny PR folk or reading letters complaining about various bills and legislations from your earnest constituents.

With the help of your PDA (Personal Digital Assistant), you can access an astonishing wealth of information covering every aspect of American politics and believe me, you'll need it. The only way to move up the ladder and become speaker of the house is to take part in the *Capitol Hill* quiz and correctly answer a number of questions relating to the house and senate and all things political.

Capitol Hill is undoubtedly an impressive product. It contains more than 45 minutes of video clips, plus narration for every part of the program. Unfortunately, as is the case with most edutainment products, it falls roundly into the 'alright if you like this sort of thing' category.

If you have any interest in the US political system, you simply must see this program. Otherwise, give it a wide berth and get yourself a 'proper' game. *Chris Anderson*

Comprehensive introduction to American politics.



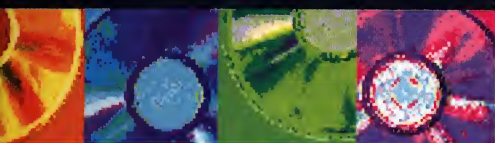
Learn everything you didn't want to know about National Statuary Hall.



specs Min. Memory: 4Mb
Min. Processor: 386DX
Min. Speed: 33MHz Installation: Essential
Min. Hard Disk Space: 5Mb
Min. Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported: MPC rated sound card (Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib etc.)
Controls: Mouse Comments: Needs Windows 3.1

Price: £39.99 Out: Now Publisher: Software Toolworks Telephone: 0444 246333





The Journeyman



Having picked up an embarrassing array of accolades in its Mac CD form, *The Journeyman Project* is now gearing up for launch on PC CD.

Paul Lakin has a sneak look while **Mark Burgess** asks: 'So what is this Space-Time Continuum anyway?'



'The interiors are all dim and moody, the exteriors exceptionally sharp and crisp.'

THE SPIRIT of Dr Who lives! With *The Journeyman Project* you get the chance to play a character not dissimilar to a Time Lord though in fact your gang goes round by the far more impressive and upmarket name of the Temporal Protectorate. Your mission, if you decide to accept it, (he said in a hazy confusion of late '60s TV shows), is to guard history against the tamperings of persons less well adjusted than yourself. People, for example, who wish to tamper with the fabric of time and change history, thereby ensuring that Graham Taylor never gets anywhere near the England job.

Just when, through co-operation with the alien 'Cyrollans', humanity is about to enter a higher plane of existence, 'On the eve of humanity's transcendence into the heavens' no less, warning alarms sound. That ripping sound you heard was not the optimistically small pair of satin trousers you're wearing. It's the fabric of time being tampered with. That's torn it.

Time for a change

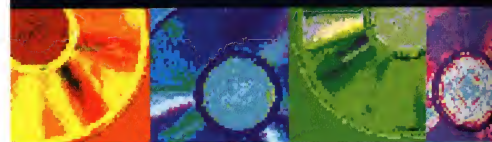
In terms of what you know at the beginning of the game, that is pretty much that. *The Journeyman Project* is a game of discovery. Not only do you have to stop people doing things, but first you have to find out what they're doing and how

Journalist redundancy shock

In an outrageous attempt to put hard-working computer journalists out of a job, Presto Studios, the development team behind *The Journeyman Project*, has included its own 'blueprint' of the game within the manual. This shows, through diagrams, screenshots and test screens, how the game moved from rough story concept, through 3D modelling and animation to the finished all-singing all-dancing product. A process of some 15,000 man hours.

All very laudable stuff, if not entirely serious – the picture illustrating 'concepts, gameplay and brainstorming' is of the team mucking about in a swimming pool – but these guys have clearly not heard of demarcation. Next time you see an out-of-work computer games journalist begging on a street corner, nudge your friend and say: 'It was the guys at Presto who did for him'.





Project

they're doing it. The game is completely non-linear with more than one solution for each problem. What there is no getting away from, though, is time travel from the prehistoric past to the post-historic future.

Not that the game encourages idle hopping from one time-zone to another. Your final score will suffer if you've flitted from time-zone to time-zone like a Tardis on acid.

The criminally violent among you will be disappointed to learn that to score really highly you need to look for a peaceful solution to the problems you face. There's even a Ghandi bonus if all zones are completed non violently. Not something that will be awarded in the PC Zone office.

Future shocks

Being as how it's a CD-ROM game, you'd expect *Journeyman* to have relatively impressive graphics. However, as you can judge from the screenshots, these are looking to be really exceptional. The interiors are all dim and moody, the exteriors exceptionally sharp and crisp. As well as the photorealistic 3D graphics there's at least 30 minutes of Quicktime video. If Graham Jarvis, who apparently guest-starred in the 'Unification' episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, is your idea of a major film star, then these video sequences are shot using major film stars. If not, then these sequences are shot using professional actors, some of whom have probably turned up on late night rrv cop shows or sit-coms.

The team behind the game is obviously pretty impressed by the soundtrack, too, since they've included a hi-fi version of it on the CD.

Big Mac

It's usual in this office to take a slightly sneery attitude to Mac games. Whenever the team on our sister magazine *The Mac* bring a game to show us, we lean back in our chairs and smile superciliously. 'Oh that,' we say in our most patronising tones. 'That came out last year on PC.' Not so with *The Journeyman Project*. It's been out on Mac CD for about a year and has picked up some fairly outstanding reviews in the States. Will it do as well in the increasingly competitive PC CD world? In the manner of the Saturday film club, you'll have to wait until next month to find out. **Z**

specs

Minimum Memory: 640K **Min. Processor:** 386

Minimum Speed: 33MHz **Installation:** N/A

Minimum Hard Disk: 8Mb **Minimum Graphics:** SVGA **Soundcards:**

Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum **Controls:** Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Requires Windows 3.1 and 640 x 480 - 256 colour Window video driver and 512K video RAM. Also requires QuickTime version 1.5 (incl. on CD)

Price: £39.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** Gametek **Tel:** 0753 553445



Single to 55BC, please

Mark Burgess summarises Stephen Hawking's theories in 350 words

The 'Particle Accelerating Space/Time Transporter v. one' is the thing that sends agents through tunnels in the space/time continuum. 'In layman's terms,' says the manual, 'it is a time machine'. Oh yeah, like the Tardis. There aren't a lot of technical details, or any explanation of the principles but the 'particle accelerator' bit is a hint. Some particles do travel faster than light and so appear to travel through time. A neutrino will arrive on Earth before the event that formed it is seen. This isn't a paradox: the principle of cause and event still apply. It is just that the neutrino's 'subjective' time is different from ours and so it seems to us to have travelled back through time.

All descriptions of time travel rely on apparent paradoxes in quantum mechanics or a misunderstanding of a metaphor. As soon as someone talks of the space/time continuum as a fabric, you can depend on it that some literal-minded person will assume that it therefore has 'rips', 'threads' or, God help us, a 'weaver'. In fact space/time is simply a convenient way of describing an event in the four dimensions in which it occurs.

Roger Penrose proposed a form of cosmic censorship that would militate against time travel: singularities (points in space/time where the space/time curvature becomes infinite) always lie entirely in the future (gravitational collapse singularities) or entirely in the past, like the Big Bang. This rules out travel through 'wormholes' which are so beloved of science-fiction writers. A person trying to pass through one would find that his own time had come to an end and the wormhole always lay in his future. There is a chance that travel to the *past* could occur near naked singularities; that is, singularities not surrounded by black holes - assuming that such exist. It remains that time travel (for humans or other animals) is highly unlikely.

(Left) And through the oblong window... aaaah!
(Above) Revealed - the hole where you swept all those fog ends.
(Below) 'But this is the furnished room' said the landlord unconvincingly.



So far, during the HackMasters™ Conference, we've had seminars on RPGs, flight sims, and shareware games. Now, we, The HackMasters™, feel the time is propitious for a delve into the mysterious world of the Space Simulator.

Space, as we've been informed, is the final frontier. The inky void. The great black outdoors. The infinite cosmos. Unlimited miles of clichéd nothingness. Space Simulators, in one form or another, deceive us into thinking that one day man will develop 'warp drives' or discover 'wormholes' and be able to shunt backwards and forwards across the cosmos in a blink of an eye. What a load of rubbish. But – hey – what's wrong will a little bit of scientifically impossible, blinkered and totally unrealistic fantasy on a Sunday afternoon? Besides, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* makes great TV and where would our childhoods be without an early dose of Darth Vader and Chewbacca's matted fur? Read on, then, cheater, and penetrate the inky black megabytes of those whopping great space operas which need an entire hard disk just for their ray-traced intros.

The HackMasters™ are (in hierarchical order):
David McCandless, Network, Johnathon Mell, and Brian Oxley.

Space Sims

The potential for full scale hack-
oramas in the Space Simulator world
is limited only by your imagination.
Privateer, X-Wing, Elite, Starcontrol II
– all are easily manipulated,
stretched and poked up the exhaust
port, while pleasing little character-
based space escapades such as
Star Trek and *Rebel Assault* benefit
from a little tweaking.

ARMAGEDDON (Psygnosis)

Not strictly a Space Sim we know, but hackers can't be choosers. Play the game as per normal, save a game called CHEATY and then quit out. Backup the file CHEATY.SAV and then *debug*:

>NCHETY.SAV

>L

>E 04FB C8

>E 0549 C9

>E 0597 CA

>E 05E5 CB

>E 0633 CC

>E 0681 CD

>E 0807 C8 200

>E 06CF 90 01

>E 071D 91 01

>E 076B 92 01

>E 07B9 93 01

>E 0855 95 01

>E 08A3 96 01

>E 08F1 97 01

>E 093F 98 01

>E 098D 99 01

>E 09DB 9A 01

>E 0A29 9B 01

>W

>Q

Loads of vehicles

Neutron bombs

400+ of every weapon

ELITE PLUS (Gametek)

The old and gold, better than its son, the much-hyped and (in our opinion) much-rubbish *Frontier*.

HOW TO

For a detailed exposition of the ins, outs, and how-the-hells of the HackMaster™ hacks, turn to the Troubleshooter section (page 132) and read the explanation therein.

REQUEST STOP

If you're stuck in some strange game we've never heard of, or some new game we've never hacked (fat chance) then drop us a line. We are glad to offer you the chance to request a hack. Send a letter, or phone on the TruePlayer Tips day, detailing the game, the publisher and what exactly would constitute a 'good hack'. Correspondence to: 'HackMasters™' – you're the best, the greatest and all that licky stuff', PC ZONE, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ. We'll do our best to satisfy your needs (as it were).

Nevertheless, all the new converts to the *Elite* ethos may find some kitsch value in this, the original. So if you're having trouble with money (as ever) during your interplanetary jet-setting then simply backup the file ELITE.EXE as ELITE.BAK and then copy the file ELITE.EXE into ELITE.TMP. Now *debug*:

>NELITE.TMP

>L

>E 9A28 EB

Buy any weapon

>E 9AFE EB

Buy anything else

>W

>Q

So now you can buy anything, regardless of your cash-flow situation.

EPIC (Ocean)

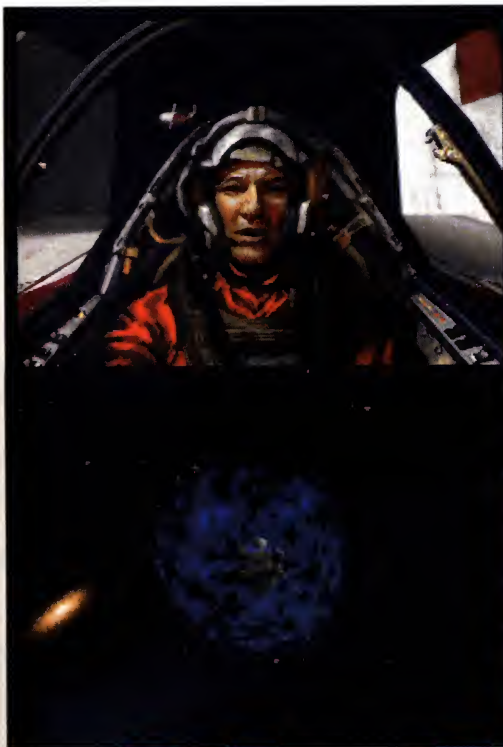
We're embarrassed to feature this game, we really are. But somebody, somewhere, in some alternate dimension may be stuck on it. Just in case, check out the level codes:

AURIGA, CEPHEUS, MUSCA, PYXIS, CETUS, FORMAX, CAELUM, and CORVUS.

FRONTIER: ELITE II (Gametek)

A huge debate has arisen over this game. Turning point or turkey? They're the words playing on most gamers' lips. Garish colours, dull eventless gameplay, loads of bugs, say some. Psychedelic experience, total freedom and idiosyncrasies, say the others. Eminently hackable, say the HackMasters™. For mounds and mounds and

THE HACKMASTER™



mounds of lolly, backup the file EL2M12.OVL in the FRONTIER directory and then *debug*:

```
>NEL2M12.OVL
>L
>E 107F 72 05
>E 29ED 72 05
>E 2B00 72 05
>W
>Q
```

Run the game after this and you'll find you can buy endless amounts of expensive goods for no cost and then sell them back at 100 percent profit. This, of course, boosts your dosh rating to high heaven, allowing you to nip intermittently to the shipyards to buy all sorts of hardware.

PRIVATEER (Electronic Arts)

Since *Privateer* is the only Origin game for a long time not to have a built-in cheat mode, we've had to resort to a cunning underhand method to re-balance the odds in your favour. You can plump for a mega-money hack or – and this is more fun – delve profoundly into the code and change your enemies' ship data.

MEGA-MONEY

Play the game as per, save a game called CHEATY and then quit out.

Method 1: With Xtree Gold or PC Tools, head for hex offset 0306 of the CHEATY.SAV and change the values therein to 40 4B 4C for five million credits.

Method 2: Using *debug*, type:

```
>NCHEATY.SAV
>L
>E 0400 49 00 00 00 08
>E 0405 0A 0A 0A 0A 0A
>E 040A 00 00 00 44 41 54
>W
>Q
```

Method 3: Start a new game and save the game as CHEATY. With your disk editor, search for the bytes D0 07 and change it to FF FF FF FF.

SUBTLE ALTERATIONS

We, The HackMasters™, believe that the alien ships can be somewhat – how shall we put this – painful when it comes to high speed combat. Embark, then, on a voyage of subtle enhancement of your ship with Xtree Gold or similar disk editor.

Firstly make a backup of the file OBJECTS.TRE (to be found in the PRIVATEER directory) as OBJECTS.BAK. It's three megs in size so make sure you have enough disk space before you copy. Now, if at any stage you want to restore your ship back to its 'factory specifications' then all you have to do is copy OBJECTS.BAK to OBJECTS.TRE. Now, take a gander at the table below:

	Spd.	Aft.	Accel.	Pitch	Yaw	Roll
CENTURION						
Find:	F4 01	E8 03	F4 01	9E 00	A8 00	A0 00
At:	254CD6	254CE6	254CD2	254CDA	254CDE	254CE2
GALAXY						
Find:	2C 01	EE 02	4A 01	70 00	72 00	7A 00
At:	2554F2	255502	2554EE	2554F6	2554FA	2554FE
TARSUS						
Find:	2C 01	58 02	13 01	5F 00	61 00	69 00
At:	254ABA	254ACA	254AB6	254ABE	A54AC6	A54AC2
ORION						
Find:	5E 01	20 03	5E 01	69 00	6B 00	73 00
At:	2568B0	2568C0	2568AC	2568B4	2568BC	2568B8
CHANGE TO:						
Max	B8 0B	10 17	4C 1D	D0 07	D0 07	D0 07
Subtle	FF 05	FF 05	FF 07	00 01	00 01	00 01

Max Spd, Aft, and Accel refer to, respectively, to speed, afterburners and acceleration. Pitch is your up and down movement, roll is your 360 rotational ability, and increase yaw allows you to shift left and right more readily. You must be careful when

adding the maximum values. Fun they are, sensible they're most certainly not. If you go too fast you'll end up in another sector before you've even seen your enemy.

REBEL ASSAULT (LucasArts/US Gold)

Yes, we know we've only reviewed it this issue but by the time you see this HackMasters™ Conference you'll probably have played, won, and binned this CD-ROM extravaganza. Nevertheless, here are a few of the level passwords to get you a bit further into the game.

Try: BIGGS, KAIBURR, MYNOCK, DAGOBAH, and MIMBAN.

SPACE QUEST IV (Sierra On-Line)

This may or may not work but it's worth giving it a try anyway. In game, the following keys might have the following effects:

- ALT-I** Show all objects and get any objects.
- ALT-M** 20 bucks on your pay roll.
- ALT-R** Current room number.
- ALT-T** Teleport.

SPELLJAMMER (US Gold)

This extremely esoteric and not entirely successful space strategy game will now receive a fairly down-to-earth savegame hack. Here's how to do it. Play the game as per normal but save your game as CHEAT. Quit out and backup the file CHEAT.PTY. For massive hit points (circa an amazing 1000) enter the following bytes:

```
FF FF FF 00 FF 00 FF FF FF
into the following addresses:
```

Character	Address
1	0124
2	0330
3	053C
4	0748
5	0954
6	0B60
7	0D6C
8	0F78
9	1184
10	1390

For a succulent amount of money enter:

```
FF FF FF FF
into:
```

Character	Address
1	0173
2	037F
3	058B
4	0797
5	09A3
6	0BAF
7	0DBB
8	0FC7
9	11D3
10	13DF

So, for example, to plump up the hit points and money of, for instance, character five do the following in *debug*:

```
>MCHEAT.PTY
>L
>E 0954 FF FF FF 00 FF 00 FF FF FF
(for hit points)
>E 09A3 FF FF FF FF (for dosh)
>W
>Q
```

STAR CONTROL (Accolade)

For rather a lot of 'space dollars' for the alliance in the original game use this quick *debug* thing on the savegame in slot one:

```
>MSAVEGAME.01
>L
>E 0B86 FF FF Dosh (lots of)
>W
>Q
```

STARCONTROL II (Accolade)

Now, this game has been around a few years now, but still shows no sign of dulling to the many and varied participants of the Super Melee head-to-head space combat game packaged with the full game. Those actual and budding *Starcontrol* kings may be interested to know a HackMasters' upgrade exists. With a copy of *Starcontrol II*, faithful old *debug* and a little patience, you too can have acres more fun and laughter with the Super Melee in three easy steps.

1) Enter the STARCON2 directory and backup all the ships by typing:

```
COPY *.SHP *.BAK
```

This will tuck all the ship data (the Mycons, Melnormes etc.) into safe, tidy little backup files. If you get bored of the Mega Melee then simply type:

```
COPY *.BAK *.SHP
```

to restore the originals.

2) Examine the table below:

FILENAME	ADDR 1	ADDR 2
ANDROSYN.SHP	1204	1206
ARILLOU.SHP	0F48	0F4A
BLACKURQ.SHP	1544	1546
CHENJESU.SHP	1502	1504
CHMMR.SHP	1086	1088
DRUUGE.SHP	1082	1084
HUMAN.SHP	0E88	0E8A
ILWRATH.SHP	10B2	10B4
MELNORME.SHP	17EE	17F0
MMRNHRM.SHP	1374	1376
MYCON.SHP	116C	116E
ORZ.SHP	2190	2192
PKUNK.SHP	1332	1334
SHOFIXTI.SHP	11AA	11AC
SLYANDR.SHP	128C	128E
SPATHI.SHP	0E7C	0E7E
SUPOX.SHP	0D80	0D82
SYREEN.SHP	0D5E	0D60
THRADD.SH	116E	1170
UMGAH.SHP	1194	1196
UTWIG.SHP	109A	109C
VUX.SHP	10F2	10F4
YEHAT.SHP	104E	1050
ZQOFOT.SHP	10D2	10D4

By putting 00 (zero) into each address will give you infinite firepower (so the Androsyn can release

infinite death bubbles, the Human can spit out thousands of missiles, and the Spathi can pop unlimited fart bombs).

3) To make each ship 'ninja' (lets say for example you want to ninjafy the Zqofot) enter *debug* and:

```
>NZQFOT.SHP
>L
>E 10D2 00
>E 10D4 00
>W
>Q
```

You can change all the ships, one of them, or none of them. It's a tedious process we know but the rewards are limitless (infinite even).

If you want more dosh in game, try this little bug/cheat. Go to the Earth Station and sell your last lander and then sell it again. Several ships will appear. Keep selling the ships and you'll have millions of RU.

STAR TREK 25th (Interplay)

If you're finding the Romulan, Klingon and Elasi pilots a might too feisty or are just stuck on that last mission mega-battle, you may be glad to hear that a hack is available. Backup the file STARTREK.EXE as STARTREK.BAK and then, using Xtree or PC Tools, do the following:

```
Find: FC 2C D5 74 06 B8
Change to: FC 2C D5 74 4A B8
```

When Mr Sulu raises shields, they'll stay raised - no matter how much of a battering she takes or cannae take (that's Infinite Shields to you non-trekkers out there).

WING COMMANDER (Electronic Arts)

The most famous cheat in the world is, of course, the *Wing Commander* command line classic. Simply by typing:

```
WC Origin -k
```

with a capital 'O' and a lowercase 'k', when you run the game the built-in trainer will be activated. From then on, you'll have infinite shields and pressing ALT-DEL together will destroy the current target (including wingmen). But if you find the cheat a little too global, and you possess a disk-editing utility then you might like to backup the WC.EXE and then scrutinise this little table:

THE GOODIES

SHIP	FIND	CHANGE TO
Drayman	78 00 78 00 50	FF 7F FF 7F 50
Exeter	2C 01 2C 01 F0	FF 7F FF 7F F0
Hornet	28 00 28 00 2D	FF 7F FF 7F 2D
Rapier	50 00 4B 00 3C	FF 7F FF 7F 3C
Raptor	46 00 46 00 64	FF 7F FF 7F 64
Scimitar	3C 00 32 00 55	FF 7F FF 7F 55
Tigers Claw	F0 00 F0 00 DC	FF 7F FF 7F DC
Venture	96 00 96 00 6E	FF 7F FF 7F 6E

THE BADDIES

SHIP	FIND	CHANGE TO
Dralthi	32 00 32 00 2D	01 00 01 00 2D
Gratha	64 00 5F 00 8C	01 00 01 00 8C
Krant	50 00 50 00 5A	01 00 01 00 5A
Jalhti	A0 00 A0 00 C8	01 00 01 00 C8
Salthi	23 00 23 00 1E	01 00 01 00 1E

Making the changes supported by the first table will greatly enhance your ship's shields and weaponry while the second tables' addresses will

simultaneously deplete your enemies'. Unfair some might say. Tough, we would reply.

WING COMMANDER II (Electronic Arts)

The second most famous cheat in the world is, without a shadow of a doubt, the *Wing Commander II* cheat, which is exactly the same as the prequels. To run the game type:

```
WC2 Origin -k
or if you possess the Secret Missions add-ons (one or two) then type:
S01 Origin -k
or:
S02 Origin -k
```

Cheat activated! The keys are the same for *Wing Commander I*.

WING COMMANDER ACADEMY (Electronic Arts)

A little-known and potentially quite useless cheat lies dormant in the code of *Academy*. If you play this game then you'll find the cheat rather silly (considering the effort you'll make to design a mission only to cheat at it). If you're an Origin Cheat Mode collector then you may find this one an important addendum to your collection. On running the game just type:

```
wca ERTS
with a space between the two words and the ERTS in capitals.
```

As well as creating an annoying file called LOGFILE.TXT in the GAMEDAT directory (which the game will now access continually, slowing the game down a tad), the cheat mode activates certain hot key combos in game:

- ALT-O** Hit repeatedly to cause random damage to your ship.
- ALT-Z** Instantly kill yourself (a little self-defeating).
- ALT-M** On screen memory display.
- ALT-INS** Instantly kill enemies in space.
- ALT-DEL** Instantly destroy current target.



HACKDISK

Ready your cheatbuds! The HackMasters' HackDisk is coming. Soonish. Compiled, written and hacked by best HackMasters™ in the world (all three of them) this single disk will be packed to the last bytes with cheats, hacks, cracks, game editors, patches and all manner of cheaty paraphernalia, for over 150 new and not-as-new games. It will be ridiculously cheap and will be a limited offer only. Watch this space.

THE HACKMASTER™

MEGA HACK

X-WING (LucasArts)

We have had a call. Well, several. Well, okay – thousands of calls, all wanting the definitive hack on X-Wing. We want to do this, we want to do that, they bleat. Who are we but thralls to the great thronging majority known as 'cheating scum'? But you can have fun with hacks. Hacks can allow you to do outrageous, fun, silly and even interesting things without the games' permission. So, read on Obi wan, and enjoy the possibilities of the Pilot Editor, the Infinite Weapons Hack, and most imaginatively, the Design Your Own X-Wing section.

THE PILOT EDITOR

Many people have experimented with their .PLT files at regular intervals, coming across, by accident and design, the correct offsets to do the correct thing (resurrect pilots, skip missions). But have you seen one as easy to use and as downright friendly as this? We, the HackMasters, doubt it. As an added bonus we've added the codes for the *Imperial Pursuit* and *B-Wing* mission disks, so you can cheat your way through the entire trilogy.

The method is simple. Just start the game as usual, create a pilot or take an existing one, save him as CHEATY and then quit out. Immediately backup the file CHEAT.PLT and run *debug*:

› NCHEAT.PLT

› L

› E 0101 00 Resurrect pilot

› E 0102 00 Free captured pilot

› E 0103 v v = current rank

00 = cadet

01 = f.officer

02 = lieutenant

03 = captain

04 = commander

› E 0104 A0 86 01 100,000 TOD points

› E 0108 FF FF Skill rating Top Ace

› E 010A 01 Corellian Cross

› E 010B 01 Mantooine Medallion

› E 010C 01 Star of Alderaan

› E 0111 v v = merits

01 = crescent

02 = bronze cluster

03 = silver talong

04 = silver scimitar

05 = golden wings

06 = diamond thing

› E 0186 08 X-Wing maze levels complete

› E 0187 08 Y-Wing maze levels complete

› E 0188 08 A-Wing maze levels complete

› E 0189 08 B-Wing maze levels complete

› E 0320 01 01 01 01 01 01

X-Wing historic mission patch

› E 0330 01 01 01 01 01 01

Y-Wing historic mission patch

› E 0340 01 01 01 01 01 01

A-Wing historic mission patch

› E 0350 01 01 01 01 01 01

B-Wing historic mission patch

› E 0378 v Current Mission in

current tour (minus 1)

› E 03F0 v v = missions complete

Tour 1 00-08

› E 03F1 v v = missions complete

Tour 2 00-08

› E 03F1 v v = missions complete

Tour 3 00-0C

› E 03F2 v v = missions complete

Tour 4 00-1F

› E 03F4 v v = missions complete

Tour 5 00-12

› W

› Q

Most of the addresses are self-explanatory. You can put all the lines in or just one. The choice is yours. A note on the mission addresses though. You can just skip missions one by one by increasing the value of the address 0378 but the computer will not register that you've completed the missions. If you want to have a fuller effect, change the current mission address to the value you want – remembering you have to subtract one from the mission number (so if you want to play mission six you enter 05) – and then change the missions complete address to the same number to con your thickie PC into believing you've done the all the ones before it. So, if it is your desire to fly the Death Star mission, type the following in *debug*:

› NCHEATY.PLT

› L

› E 0378 0C (fourteen minus one)

› E 03F2 0B (the mission before it)

› W

› Q

INFINITE WEAPONS AND STUFF

If you're really on a low ebb skill-wise, then you might like to even the odds somewhat by equipping yourself with the latest hi-tech weaponry. That is, infinite weaponry. Yes, the Rebel Alliance's HackMaster™ division has found a way (via Xtree Gold and PC Tools) to siphon power from The Force and into the readers' of PC Zone cockpits.

Just enter the X-WING directory and backup the file FLIGHT.OVL. Now using your ever-useful disk sector editor:

Find: 80 A8 12 01 04

Change to: 90 90 90 90 90

This will give you infinite laser power on all of your ships.

Find: FE 8F 13 01

Change to: 90 90 90 90

This will endow you with an unlimited supply of projectiles. Please note, however, that you will only be able to fire about ten or so as the game can't handle too many flying objects.

Find: FE 0E 87 C3

Change to: 90 90 90 90

This will give you infinite mission time, useful for those really tight missions.

SHIP EDITOR

As if all this wasn't enough, here's a chance for you to embark in a subtle exercise in ship design. If you ever thought the top speed of the X-Wing was paltry, or the Y-Wing's turning speed was dodgy, or the A-Wing could do with a stronger hull, or you just wanted to know what it felt like to fly a Tie-Fighter, now's your chance. Armed with a copy of X-tree Gold or PC Tools, backup the file FLIGHT.OVL and then examine the tables below:

It's all really quite simple. To change a certain characteristic on a ship, firstly search for the appropriate FIND bytes. It's highly probable that you'll end up finding them more than once, so make sure it's the bytes at the AT address which you change. Once found, just edit them to the specifications indicated, or to your own if you're that way inclined. Be careful when entering very large numbers though, especially into the speed characteristics – the game is highly likely to crash. Included for fun are the handling attributes for a variety of Imperial ships. Try to see if you can handle dogfighting when you're going as slow as a Star Destroyer.

SHIP		HULL	SPEED	F.SHIELD	R.SHIELD	ACCEL.	ROLL	PITCH
X-WING	Find	34 08	E1 00	C4 09	C4 09	0C	2C	0F
	At	2B60F	2B613	2B609	2B60B	2B615	2B61E	2B620
	Change to:	0F 27	F4 01	0F 27	0F 27	63	63	63
Y-WING	Find	68 10	B4 00	A6 0E	A6 0E	08	1C	0D
	At	2B6EF	2B6F3	2B6E9	2B6EB	2B6F5	2B6FE	2B700
	Change to:	0F 27	F4 01	0F 27	0F 27	63	63	63
A-WING	Find	DC 05	0E 01	C4 09	C4 09	10	3C	12
	At	2B7CF	2B7D3	2B7C9	2B7CB	2B7D5	2B7DE	2B7E0
	Change to:	0F 27	F4 01	0F 27	0F 27	63	63	63
INTERESTING CHANGES								
Star Destroyer		3A 98	19 00	3A 98	3A 98	0A	08	02
Tie Fighter		DC 05	A5 01	00 00	00 00	00	00	32

Blueprint

Lords of Midnight III: The Citadel

PUBLISHER: Domark

PRICE: tba

TELEPHONE: 081 780 2222

OUT: Spring 1994



Despite whinging that he had to be in bed before ten, **Paul Lakin** agreed to visit the offices of Domark to cast a glance at the return of one of the computer games world's original masterpieces.

Prince Morkin



Fonests



Henges



Lakes



Taveans



Take a rest from the cut and thrust of an adventurer's life; retire to your country cottage.



Dragon power - the ecofriendly way to fly.



THE OLD BOOK LOOK

THE BEGINNING OF *Lords of Midnight III: The Citadel* contains a large introduction sequence familiarising you with events in the previous two games. A good thing too; it's been a long time since *Lords of Midnight I* and *II* warmed the hearts of the early gamers. Now the game is back: bigger, better, more beautiful and more than ready to take up the mantle of its illustrious forebears.

In fact, knowledge of the background to *The Citadel* is not important to its enjoyment. You can get by with what Macca wrote a few issues ago in a 'Eulogy on Mike Singleton'. He summarised *Lords of Midnight* as: 'Lots of men with large pointy helmets hack each other to death over some "tundra".' The sequel, *Doomdarks Revenge*, he described as: 'In revenge for being hacked to death in the previous game, more men with helmets carve up some more men - but with larger axes this time'. Now we reach the third instalment of the story (though the first on PC) in which men with pointy helmets have to rescue another man with a pointy helmet from the clutches of some other men.

Action takes place over 12 realms held under the sway of all-round bad guy Boroth Wolfheart. Your aim is to rouse the peoples of these realms against their ruler while rescuing your own Prince who's undergoing a long sojourn at his majesty's pleasure.

In the standard RPG you control one player or, at best, a group of players who travel about the gameworld together. This is a far too limited system for someone like Mike Singleton who, even way back in the days of the dangerously seminal *Midwinter*, was developing games in which you could control numerous characters on a range of missions. No surprise, then, that in *Lords of Midnight* you have five characters who can each undertake their own individual quest with which to further your cause. You can control any of these characters at any time - so if one quest is getting bogged down (or downright dangerous) you can switch to other characters elsewhere in the game. However, the characters in *The Citadel* are not aimless morons who are unable to live without you. While the game progresses characters will act for themselves. If you leave someone at an Inn and don't come back to him for a few hours don't expect him still to be there - or if he is, don't expect him still to be able to walk. Which brings us rather neatly to one of the really special elements of *The Citadel*.

Two timer

In his attempt to create a world in which you get completely involved, Mike Singleton has produced an impressive new element to the

game. Namely real 'Real-time' time that carries on without you. If you elect to play it on this setting, then a day is a day. So if you leave off playing *The Citadel* for three weeks, when you come to load it up, the game will check the clock on your PC and then update it so that three weeks have passed in game time. That means all the characters, including the ones you control, will have moved on, carried on living their own lives or indeed losing them. It's quite possible to load up the game and find half your heroes have taken an early bath. That's the problem with heroes, always washing themselves.

Time also passes within the graphics, with a gradual changing of the scenes making itself known on the fractally generated landscape. Unlike some games, season change does not mean, 'Whoops there go all the leaves, must be Autumn'. Instead, the changes are gradual, leaf fall even varying according to the type of tree it is.

I wandered lonely

Making his way through this landscape is your hero, or whichever one you're controlling at the time, a character proud in his body of animated texture bitmaps. The viewpoint in *The Citadel* can be either the first person perspective beloved of RPG adventurers, or from a camera which is able to follow the main character as if on a bit of string.

There are two ways of controlling the movements of your character during the game. You can either guide him, every step of the way, towards his next destination or else you can tell him where you want him to go next and leave it to him to get there by himself. Left to his own devices the character will choose the best route possible: The artificial intelligence used to calculate the route the character follows will take into account not only such geographical obstacles as slopes and water, but how far the character can see.

Along this route there are, of course, a whole host of characters to meet, interact with and kill. This includes both human and other creatures - there are, for instance, dragons. Some of these are of the 'How would you and your party like to experience a barbecue from the meat's point of view?' school of good manners; others act as a form of early airline-service. It's important not to confuse the two.

Combat within *The Citadel* represents one of the many attempts to get away from the traditional RPG way of things. The action is more dynamic where you have to aim your hit with care. Says producer Chris Johnson: 'It's not like *Bards Tale*-type games where you take a hit, they take a hit etc.' ☒



The menu system of *The Citadel* is based around the layout of medieval books; it's all to do with atmosphere and that sort of thing. To add to the feeling that you are overseeing the whole area, there is the map over which you can move a glass sphere, a sort of early magnifying-glass. As this sphere moves over items on the map they become refracted as if... well, as if they were being viewed through a glass sphere. All right, so it's not a huge bonus to the gameplay, but I liked it. So there.

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO: BITS & PCs, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ



The old 8086 lay in the corner of the room. Something dreadful had happened here, and Mark Burgess was

determined to find out what was behind all this corruption.

Memories Are Made Of This

THE JAMES WESTON letter was very interesting but I do not fully agree with the reply given to it. Memory is the problem and conserving it may be the answer. Stacks are provided for the hardware interrupts by DOS. Zero is the default for PC, PC/XT, PC Portable and compatible machines. The PC/AT, PS/2 and compatible machines use nine.

The machine that this was written on came with the default setting (9,256 I think). To free up memory this was set at 6,0 as it is primarily used for Windows, and though this is meant to cause problems with Windows 3.0 it has never caused any problems with 3.1.

There have been no problems, even when running DOS sessions. Part of James' problem may be how EMM386.EXE is running. On this system it is used for providing expanded memory to load DOS high and to load some drivers high. Load any necessary parts of the system in this way (if they can be), as this clears out the 640K base. I think the problem is that there is too much trying to fit into the 640K, so the Stacks are part of the problem.

A somewhat easy way to find out memory requirements is to use FIND, Norton's Text Search (rs). Locate this under the File Menu in PC Tools to search for 'Requires' and this will conveniently find all the requirement error messages you would receive should you have forgotten something. Simpler than wading through manuals or photocopies as the case may be.

Michael Solan, Cattlebar, Co. Mayo, Eire

Go Faster

I HAVE A PACKARD BELL 386SX 25MHZ and a problem - more of a dilemma actually - so I am writing to PC Zone for some advice. Being from the school of consumer mugs, I bought my computer a little over a year ago believing I was buying a top-of-the-range PC that I could upgrade in the future. Imagine my dismay when I found that I couldn't.

As is obviously apparent by now, I haven't got a clue about computers but have been told that I can upgrade my PC (imagine my happiness) by using a new chip from Cyrix: the CX486SRX2. This will apparently double my computer's speed. Now, if I buy this chip and some more RAM, another 4Mb

(this will expand my RAM to 6Mb) and put up with my 105/15ms hard drive, will I have in essence a 486DX? This lot is going to cost in the region of £600 which, while sounding a lot, is a damn sight cheaper than buying a brand new 486DX PC.

Mostly Harmless

YOU know it really bugs me when I read a game review (not preview) in a magazine and then have to wait four or five weeks before the bloody thing's released. Take, for example, Ocean's TFX. All the mags have reviewed it but I can't get hold of a copy until the middle of November. I don't know whether it will have shadows but it pisses me off no end having to wait drooling.

I liked the 'world exclusive Elite II review' on the cover. I've been playing it for the best part of a week, but how do I get back to the DOS prompt after playing? I go to the options screen and select 'exit' but then all I get is the demo at the start. 'CTRL-ALT-DEL' doesn't work so I have to switch off.

I upgraded Falcon 3 to the latest version via Mig 29 (what a bitch to fly she is!). The only fault is that I can't start the mission recorder!

I've got a 386SX 33 with 2Mb ram and a 120Mb Hard disk, DOS 5 (who needs DOS 6!) and Sound Galaxy NXII. And an Amiga 1200 so don't slag them off (Workbench 3 is brill; Windows is crap).

Edward Robson, Town unknown?

P.S. Do you know of any tank sims coming out soon? Is Spectrum Holobyte updating their brill Tank and how about MicroProse M1 Tank?

Most software houses release a game to the shops and to the magazines at the same time. This gives a rubbishy game eight weeks' worth of sales before the bad reviews hit the streets.

Clever old you to have been playing Frontier: Elite II for a week. When I reviewed it we did have an exclusive - the game hadn't even been mastered and I played one of the very few extant copies on David Braben's PC.

How you can play a game for a week without finding out how to quit intrigues me. Try CTRL-C at the start-up screen.

The Falcon 3 problem might be due to memory; do you have at least 1Mb expanded? The digitised messages take up an extra 300K. You might have to turn off the Radio Messages, Altitude Data or Object Data. Some people found that excluding addresses A000-C7FF helped. There is a patch to Falcon 3.02 that takes it to 3.02.1 and Mig 29 1.0 to 1.01 but this deals with video problems and CH Flightstick compatibility.

Novalogic is about to release Amoured Fist and, yes, MicroProse are working on a new version of M1 Tank called Across The Rhine. Apparently it has better graphics and all sorts. Spectrum Holobyte are thinking about a deluxe version of Tank (translation: don't hold your breath). MB.

I am told that it will make Windows and my wordprocessor run faster, but to get down to the nitty gritty of the issue, will it fool games like Strike Commander into thinking I have a cool PC rather than the crappy one I have right now? If not, I will have to go without and save up for a good one. In the meantime I will read your mag and dream of playing the games I read about that won't work on my specky machine. So, what is your advice. To upgrade or not upgrade?

Can you explain what the difference is between a 386 and a 486 except the speed? I am worried about missing something vital that I don't know about if I do the upgrade.

Edward Sayer, Herts

The Cyrix chip plugs into your 386 motherboard and will allow your machine to run 486 specific software. But it won't make your computer a 486DX. The Cyrix chips may be compatible with the 486 but they do not offer the same performance or speed as the real thing. And you can't upgrade them with clock doubling as you can with a pukka 486.

Look at motherboard upgrades, which will give you a full 486 chip. They are within the same price range.

The 386 chip is a 32-bit internal, 16/32-bit external chip and the 486 is a full 32/32-bit chip. That's one difference. The 486 is an improved design so it will perform operations faster (about twice as fast) than a 386 of the same speed. Clock doubling will speed up a 486 by about a third. I would go for the 486 motherboard upgrade; it gives you room to manoeuvre. MB.

Readers' Writes

With reference to the 'X-Wing Hanger' letter in your September issue; I had the same problem. I tried altering the sound set-up but I still had the same trouble. Eventually I managed to get round the problem by buying a games-port card and using the joystick on that instead of the Sound Blaster port, and by turning off MOUSE.COM. Hope this will be of use to someone.

Ian Harrison, Wilmslow, Cheshire

Queue Jumping

I RECENTLY ADDED AN Orchid Sound Producer Pro to a Wearnes 486SX-25 PC that has 4Mb RAM. It worked perfectly until a Genius 4500A hand scanner was put in as well. The games that had accepted my soundcard before had now lost some of the sound channels. I know this because on the Syndicate start-up the car sound disappeared but the music was there; in the game, only the music was selectable. In Wolfenstein, whenever Sound Blaster digitised sound was selected the game froze completely after a few seconds of play. I've read the technical supplements for both peripherals and my Orchid manual suggested changing the DMA and IRQ settings. I have tried various combinations but am unable to achieve any results. I've even tried leaving out the scanner driver in the CONFIG.SYS but even this hasn't made any difference. I think the scanner card inside the machine is still active and doesn't know what to do.

I'm not sure if it's a memory problem or not because I use a boot disk for *Syndicate* with an empty AUTOEXEC.BAT except for MOUSE.COM and no CONFIG.SYS for maximum memory, but even this doesn't work when the scanner is in.

I've included the AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS with the scanner driver in.

Please help me before I tear out the scanner card with my bare teeth in frustration!

```
AUTOEXEC.BAT
@ECHO OFF
LH MOUSE
PATH
C:\DOS;C:\WINDOWS;C:\WINWORKS\EXEC;C:\NU
SET NU=C:\NU
SET TEMP=C:\WINDOWS\TEMP
C:\WINDOWS\SMARTDRV.EXE
PROMPT=$P$G
LH C:\DOS\KEYB.UK,,C:\DOS\KEYBOARD.SYS
MODE CON: RATE=30 DELAY=2
LH C:\DOS\SHARE
SET BLASTER=A220 I7 D1 T4
CONFIG.SYS
COUNTRY=044,,C:\DOS\COUNTRY.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\HIMEM.SYS
DEVICE=C:\DOS\EMM386.EXE NOEMS
DOS=HIGH,UMB
SHELL=C:\COMMAND.COM /P /E:1024
FILES=40
BUFFERS=20
STACKS=9,256
DEVICE=C:\IPDELUXE\GSCAN.SYS /T=GS4500
/D=3 /I=5
```

Iain Oliver, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk

It certainly sounds like a DMA or IRQ conflict. *Wolfenstein* will only work with IRQ of 7 or less and the ideal is 5. Your card settings are A (Address) 220 I(RQ) 7 D (DMA)1 and T4, which seem okay. Try IRQ 5 and DMA 0 or 3 and T as 1 or 3. You will have to move your scanner from IRQ 5 to IRQ 7. IRQ numbers after 7 (8-15) are called secondary interrupts - they are an extension of the original 0-7 and sometimes badly implemented.

To get all the effects in *Syndicate* type 'MAIN/IRQ5' at the prompt.

The NOEMS switch in your CONFIG.SYS runs EMM386 in the upper memory area only, preventing the driver from simulating expanded memory. Only do this if none of your programs need expanded memory - otherwise use the RAM switch (e.g. EMM386.EXE 2048 RAM). **MB.**

Video Fast Forward

My CURRENT SYSTEM is a 486DX, 4Mb ram, Trident 8900 SVGA card, 250Mb HD, Gravis Pro joystick.

I don't have the usual problems, I have loads of free memory and have a reasonable grasp of day to day PC matters.

1. My biggest gripe is lack of fluid-frame updates on flight sims when run at high detail. This is most noticeable on *Flight Sim 5*, *Comanche*, *Falcon 3*, *F15 III* and *Strike Commander*. Can this be neutralised by changing the board to a DX2 monster plus Overdrive, or is Jerkovision™ totally unavoidable?

Would I be right in thinking that certain programmers deliberately add Jerkovision™ afterwards as a kind of cruel joke? I mean look at *X-Wing*, *MicroProse Grand Prix* and *Tornado*: all graphic hungry but go like **** of a shovel.

Seal Cull

Please could you tell me why your cover disk issue eight, *Seal Team*, will not run on my computer. I get an error message 'REQUIRES 97600 BYTE EMS'. What is going on? My computer is an Amstrad ALT 386SX with 640K base memory and 1408 extended memory.

Paul Collinson
I've just recently bought a 486 and am new to the world of PCs.

The problem I have is with your cover disk *Seal Team* (issue eight). I followed the loading instructions to the letter only to be told on screen 'REQUIRES 600000 BYTES OF CONVENTIONAL MEMORY'. After hours of reading through my DOS and Windows manuals about memory, I came to the conclusion I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I'm really pissed off, it cost me well over a grand for the computer and the sod won't even load a demo. Please can you help me.

My computer is a Ambra Hurdla 486 33, 4Mb RAM, 100 Mb hard drive and an SVGA monitor. I use MS-DOS 5 and Windows. I also have a Sound Blaster version 2 installed.

Peter Hocking, Chester-le-Street, Co Durham
Seal team needs about 590K base memory and 1Mb extended memory. Mr Collinson needs a line in his CONFIG.SYS that says 'EMM386.EXE 1024 RAM'. Mr Hocking has enough conventional memory, so there must be a clash with something else in the CONFIG.SYS file. Write a new AUTOEXEC.BAT and CONFIG.SYS with only the bare minimum of stuff loaded; mouse driver, soundcard driver and extended memory driver. Load the first two into high memory ('LH' in the AUTOEXEC.BAT) and put DOS there too (DOS = HIGH, UMB). Now you can go out and get those reds, 'cos the only good commie is... etc. MB.

2. Would installing an expensive graphics card like an Orchid Fahrenheit or a Diamond Stealth (meant for Windows, I know) speed up dos-based programs like games? Could a hard drive cache controller do the same trick?

3. What would be the effect on an already temperamental joystick? It crashes very quickly on *Flight Sim 5*, making it necessary to reboot after each aircraft crash.

I know what you're thinking, some people are never happy and what about those poor people with only a 386 for company, however, I don't think I am alone with these problems.

Andrew Jamieson, Hemel Hempstead, Herts

1. The faster the computer, the better these programs should run, all other things being equal. You might be right about sloppy programming. *Frontier* has beautiful frame update even on a 386; this is probably because David Braben is such a good programmer. If you have an entire team working on a game, with different people doing different bits and the coding being farmed out to hacks then it's not surprising that the game engine finds itself driving graphics for which it wasn't intended. It is shameful and we must complain until publishers listen.

2. Depends on the card and the type. Accelerator cards are only useful for Windows and CAD. Local Bus cards are faster than standard cards but not as fast as accelerators. They work with DOS and Windows, although you will only notice an improvement in graphics programs. Those that use the Weitek P9000 chipset are said to have a lousy DOS performance. Try something with the S3 chipset and remember that those cards with VRAM are faster than those with DRAM. Look at a card like the Pegasus VI

which has a good reputation, or the Hercules Dynamite VI. Stick with those made by the main manufacturers such as Orchid, Paradise, Trident or Tseng. A hard disk cache is only useful when the program asks for the same data often; I'm not sure this is the case in flight sims. You could emulate a hard disk cache with software such as Windows' SMARTDrive and see what difference it made.

3. It should have no effect on your joystick, which I reckon is broken. The average life expectancy for a joystick in these offices is a couple of months. **MB.**

Revenge Of The 8086

TWO DAYS AGO I bought your magazine, issue seven (October), attracted firstly by the three free disks on the front cover and secondly by the fact that I could read up on the best games for my PC. With next to no knowledge of games (having only used my PC for wordprocessing business and college notes) but wanting knowledge, I thought three games disks and a magazine full of games advice would be a good place to start.

Now there comes the problem, and the reason for writing this letter. My PC is an Amstrad 5086 XT with DOS 3.3 and a lowly 640K of memory and no hard disk. There is also a mouse and joystick/games card connected. A bit of a dinosaur I know but this has always been fine for my WP work but not, it seems, good enough for games.

My main criticism is that nowhere on the disks or in the magazine did it say that these games would only work on certain PCs and I spent ages in the newsagents checking (much to his annoyance). Also the games reviewed were for 286 PCs or greater, more often than not 386. Now I know that for you to sell your magazine you have to review the latest games and that the trend is to use 386 and 486 machines, but couldn't you dedicate a slot to less powerful games?

At the £3.95 your magazine is not cheap (but then again it doesn't need to be with three disks on the front) so may I be so bold as to request one or two things as some sort of refund for my money:

1. Send me a list/reviews of the best games that will run on my PC.

2. Send me a disk with a game on that I can run. There is a third alternative - to ignore this letter - but I sincerely hope you decide not to choose it!

Please note, the newsagent would not accept the magazine back as I'd opened the plastic bag in which the disks were housed (how else could I get them into the disk drive). I don't want my money back though, I want a bloody game to play.

N. C. Downs, Barry, South Glamorgan

Oh, dear. Most games, as you say, require at least a 386.

Very few modern games will run on an 8086 and most, if not all of them need to be installed to a hard disk. In all our reviews we give technical specifications which will tell you which games will run on an 8086 and whether they need to be installed to the hard disk, so there is no need for a special ghetto.

Look at some old shareware/PD games. Many of these were written for the XT and they include arcade and adventure games. Don't expect *Tornado* though. Most shareware libraries supply programs in archived form so be sure to tell them that you don't have a hard disk and need executable files on a low density disk. A good library is the PCUG who are very helpful (0732 771 512). **MB.** ☑

TROUBLESHOOTER

FEATURING THE HACKMASTERS™ AND THE TRUEPLAYERS™

The Gamesplaying war is still waging, although it has mysteriously disappeared from our front pages and TV screens. Presumably there is a current drought of pathos-inducing shots of rural TruePlaying™ women crying and weeping over their blood-soaked villages. Nevertheless the hatred of the two parties continues unabated. The HackMasters™, in reply to the TruePlayer™ Tips line, have recruited a few more members and are stepping up their hacking campaign.



Phone: 071 917 7689
Ask for TruePlayer™ Tips
from 2.00pm to 6.00pm
on Wednesdays only.

This completely free service will supply you with cheats, hack, solutions, tips and hints – all from a real person. Don't imprison yourself with a wait of three months by writing to another magazine. Just damn well ring this number and get your answer instantly.

PC Zone and Dennis Publishing take no responsibility for alleged hardware or software damage caused by direct or indirect use of the HackMasters™ hacks and cracks. Take it from us, there is only a 0.0000001 percent chance of damaging anything (and that's only if you don't follow the instructions).

These hacks are copyright of Felden Publications 1993. If you try and pass them off as your own to another magazine, we'll get you, we will.

The HackMasters™



EGA-HACK-O-RAMA we were thinking of calling this months HackMasters™. A pretty apt byline, you'll admit when you cast your eyes over the array of hacks awaiting you. All the latest titles (*Shadowcaster*, *Alien Breed*, *Jurassic Park*) mixed with a choice nostalgia hack (*Dungeon Master*) and the monthly decimation of an RPG (*Stronghold*).

Backup

Most of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files (mainly SAVEGAME files, peppered with the occasional main .EXE file). It is then sensible to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example SAVEGAME.SAV, and back it up thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.SAV SAVEGAME.BAK
```

If you make a bad mistake and/or they introduce special rubber cutlery designed to be thrown around harmlessly in domestic arguments, then restore the files thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.BAK SAVEGAME.SAV
```

Hexadecimal

pcs count up in hexadecimal. For the HackMaster's™ experience you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers (and remember all hex numbers on this page will be suffixed with an 'H').

HEX	DECIMAL	HEX	DECIMAL
0AH	10	40H	64
0FH	15	63H	99
10H	16	64H	100
20H	32	C8H	200
28H	40	FAH	250
32H	50	FFH	255

Debug

Somewhere in the depths of your DOS folder is an extremely useful program called *debug*. It allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data. It is the program we will use most in the HackMaster Zone™ and, since it is the most user-unfriendly program on this planet, I think that a brief introduction/explanation may be in order. Here's a step by step guide to a *debug* hack:

To run it just type *DEBUG* in the appropriate directory. It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a 'file not found' style

error then your DOS path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS DOS manual and remember: don't ring us unless it's TruePlayer™ Tips day.

```
1>NALIEN.TMP <return>
```

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above: the 'N' command. This tells *debug* which program is to be hacked. There is no space between the 'N' and the full filename.

```
2>L <return>
```

This command actually loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the awaiting hands of the hacker.

```
3>E 98A2 v <return>
```

This is the Edit function. Type it as it appears above, i.e. with a space between the E and the address (98A2) and the 'v', which stands for a value you will enter yourself ranging between 00H and FFH (0 to 255 decimal). Don't actually type the letter 'v'. You'll get an error if you do.

```
4>E 4315 90 90 90
```

If the edit command looks something like this then press RETURN after the address and *debug* will repeat your command. Then simply type in the values which follow (49, 90 etc.) pressing SPACE between each, except the last when you should press RETURN. So the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type in red):

```
>E 4315 return
```

```
21FB:4315 FE.90 <space> 4C.90 <space>
```

```
5E.90 <return>
```

```
>
```

```
5>W <return>
```

This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying: 'WRITING XXXXX BYTES' will appear, where xxxxx is the size of the file. Nothing has been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. So if you've made a mistake just quit *debug* and start again.

```
6>Q <return>
```

This quits you back to DOS.

Sector editors

Some of you may possess disk sector editors such as Xtree Gold or PC Tools. It is important to note that the offset (or address) in the hacks are for *debug* which automatically adds 256 bytes (or 100 hex) to the address.

So, if you prefer to use your editor, deduct 100 hex from the address. If an address is 0141 on the page then your address will be 0041. If it's 0AA9 then you need to find offset 09A. It's just a simple case of deducting one from the third figure from the right. If in doubt, use *debug*.



Stronghold: Worry no more about the blood-levels and stamina in your castle. Also, tell this lady to get a haircut.

ELITE II (Gametek)

Hot on the hexadecimal heels of our subliminal 999-nil victory over David Braben's *Elite II* last month we, the HackMasters™, have received information from Phil Wand of a glaring programming mistake-cum-cheat buried in the code of *Frontier*. The method is simple. Buy loads of extra passenger cabins for your ship and fill them to slavery point with people seeking transport to other worlds (use the bulletin board to lure them). Then go to the 'New or Reconditioned Ships' section and buy the worst ship on the menu - one without enough room for all your lovely new cabins. The computer will inform you that you can't complete the purchase (because you don't have enough room for the cabins etc.) but you'll find your bank balance has been credited with the part-exchange price of the ship you just tried to buy. Repeat this procedure ad infinitum and money will never be a problem again.

JURASSIC PARK (Ocean)

To play the final 3D sections without having to trawl through acres of 2D Dull-O-Scape™ levels, then follow this quick and easy HackMasters™ trick. Enter the JURASSIC directory and type:

`DIR *.EXE`

A list of about 5 .EXE files will appear. Now, make a backup of the file JP2D.EXE by typing:

`COPY JP2D.EXE JP2D.BAK`

and then copy the JP3D.EXE file over the JP2D file by typing:

`COPY JP3D.EXE JP2D.EXE`

Play the game as per usual and when you start a new game you'll be on the final 3D Texture-Map-O-Thon level. If you want to restore your exciting dinosaur game back to normal just type:

`COPY JP2D.BAK JP2D.EXE`

SHADOWCASTER (Electronic Arts)

This game can be rather tough. Rather dull as well, but that's another story. Allow, then, the HackMasters™ to plump up your gameplay with some handy - nay essential - little debuggerettes for your *Shadowcaster* savegame. Firstly, play your game as usual and when the action is getting your energy down, save the game in slot one and plop out to DOS. Enter the S1 directory and back up the file GAME.SAV as GAME.BAK then enter *debug*:

`>NGAME.SAV`

`>L`

`>E 4758 FF 01`

Man's current health

`>E 4870 FF 01`

Man's max health

`>E 49C8 FF 01`

Current power

`>E 49CC FF 01`

Max power

`>E 4780 FF 01`

Cat's current health

`>E 4898 FF 01`

Cat's max health

`>W`

`>Q`

When you 'wake up' in your non-RPG world, you'll have the magic number 596 registering in the above categories. Take on board, though, the fact that when you receive 'a surge of life and energy' (i.e. go up a level) your stats will revert back to their original, lower versions. This is a cue for you to save your game, quit out and repeat the whole process. Also, on the later levels, if your health and power exceed 596 then try putting FF 05 into the addresses for a 1535 rating.

EPIC PINBALL (Epic Megagames)

For infinite balls and a totally pointless game on this pinball sim, why not backup the file EP1.EXE and then, using your copy of Xtree Gold or PC Tools, search for the bytes: FE 06 37 68 and then change them to 90 90 90 90. Note that when I checked this on XTG it wouldn't find FE 06 37 68 but would find FE 0E 37.

STRONGHOLD (US Gold)

An RPG at last. Those familiar with the HackMasters™ loathing of all that is Role, Playing and Game will understand our relish when confronted with the hacking possibilities of pseudo-RPG *Stronghold*. 'Yummy, yummy, yummy,' Brian Oxley said, whilst rubbing his copy of *debug*. The method, as usual, is: play the game, save it in slot one, quit out, enter the SAVE directory, backup the file SAVE.000 and then closely examine the following table:

STAT	CHAR 1	CHAR 2	CHAR 3	CHAR 4	CHAR 5
Strength	D456	D7BC	B86A	D918	D9C6
Dexterity	D457	D7BD	B86B	D919	D9C7
Wisdom	D458	D7BE	B86C	D91A	D9C8
Constitution	D459	D7BF	B86D	D91B	D9C9
Charisma	D45A	D7C0	B86E	D91C	D9CA
Intelligence	D45B	D7C1	B86F	D91D	D9CB

Putting 'FF' in the above address will maximise the corresponding stats. In addition, to bump up the food rating of each character put FF FF in the following addresses:

CHAR 1	D48D
CHAR 2	D7F3
CHAR 3	B86F
CHAR 4	D910
CHAR 5	DA1B

So, for instance, if you want to increase the strength of character 2, the charisma of character 4, and the food ratings of characters 1, 3 and 5, do the following in *debug*:

`>NSAVE.000`

`>L`

`>E D7BC FF` Str char 2

`>E D91C FF` Char char 4

`>E D48D FF FF` Food char 1

`>E B86F FF FF` Food char 2

`>E DA1B FF FF` Food char 3

`>W`

`>Q`

Note: this hack will only work on the 'Begining World' section. Do not try it if you've reached any other 'worlds'.

Shadowcaster: Give the skellies what for with our infinite power hack.



ALIEN BREED

(Team 17)

We give ye four options for the hacking and cracking of this natty little *Aliens* 'tribute':

1) Backup the file ALIEN.EXE as ALIEN.BAK and then copy the file ALIEN.EXE to

ALIEN.TMP. Debug and:

>NALIEN.TMP

>L

>E 4315 90 90 90 Infinite Lives ply 1

>E 435C 90 90 90 Infinite Lives ply 2

>W

>Q

Then copy the file ALIEN.TMP to ALIEN.EXE and find the game substantially easier.

2) With your copy of PC Tools, Xtree Gold or similar disk sector, search the file for two occurrences of the bytes FE 4C 5B and replace them each time with 90 90 90 for infinite lives for both players.

3) Try these level codes:

AAJINGDDC, CGGHDGGDG, HDICICII,

IDHEHDGCC, IJIIIDIHC, CFDFEFEFJ,

JIIJIIIC, AAAABAAAA, CGDGBBBB,

HHIAAJJIG, GGDDJJHFD, JIECBFGFF,

HGGEDDCGB, HHHGFGDCC, IHDCHGHFF.

4) Try typing these codes (with spaces) on the computer screen. If you've typed them correctly, you'll hear a beep (PC speaker) or a *Star Trek* door-opening sound (Sound Blaster). Some work, some don't. Some will print a message in reply, some will have an advantageous/adverse reaction to the game. Experiment.

KNACKERED JOYSTICK, LEAVING MR
CHRISTMAS, CUT A DISK, KEY TO THE CITY,
MR YALE OR WHAT, JUST CALL ME MOGGY, WHY
NOT CALL ME MOGGY AS WELL, JESUS THIS
JIM BEAMS IS GOOD STUFF, AHH BUT WILL
SHE SWALLOW IT, STEVIE WONDER, KATRINA
HAS PARTED AND ITS A BEAUTY, HARD
BASTARDS, ALIENS LIKE MICHAEL BOLTON,
JANUARY SALE NOW ON, ALIENS ARE BENDERS,
ST EMULATOR, SALMAN RUSHDIE PLAYS ALIEN
BREED, THE IRAQIS MADE THE WEAPONS, PC
EMULATOR, I WANT FISH, ELVIS MODE, ST
USERS, PC ZONE, PC HOME, PC FORMAT, and
PC REVIEW.

NOSTALGIA HACK

DUNGEON MASTER

(Psygnosis)

This very old, but classic RPG has a special place in the HackMasters™ hearts. It has been out for a year or two now and has remained firstly, the best designed RPG ever; secondly, one of the hardest and most challenging adventures ever; and thirdly (most importantly), totally unhacked. So, adventurers around the world, dig up your dusty copy of DM, install it and play it again, quickly, with this infinite health hack.

Backup the file FIRES (no extension) and then debug:

>NFIRES

>L

>E 8900 30 Infinite health

>W

>Q

The TruePlayers™

RETURN



It's tricky, it's fab, it's graphically wow – it's *Return To Zork*. An excuse for the TruePlayers™ to go into notepad-override if ever we played one. Aidan Reeve has supplied us with a blow-by-blow complete spoil for this adventure. It's a continuous flow-of-consciousness so be careful if you're searching for a specific hint. You may read something you shouldn't.



TO ZORK



Lighthouse, raft, Ms Peepers

You've probably already done this, but some people, you know, they get stuck right at the beginning. So pick up the rock and throw it at the vulture. Examine the sign, select the knife from your inventory and click on the bonding plant. Dig it up and go forward twice to the lighthouse. Go inside just for curiosity and realise you can't do anything here yet, so leave. Head around the left-hand side of the lighthouse and cut the vines with the knife. Tie the vines to the wooden plank and click on the raft. Go forward once and click on the bridge. Head for the schoolhouse (the first building on the right). Hit the bell with the knife and talk to Ms Peepers. Pass the copy protection and she'll give you a notebook. Don't forget to take a picture of her (you'll need it later). Now go to the Mayor's office and rootle around to find some helpful hints in his filing cabinet.

Mice, mill, giftshop

Right, now go to the hardware store (the next building on the right) and enter. Get the box and the crank but ignore the mice (they're useless). Exit and go back to the bridge, take a left, and go into the old mill. When Boos gives you the whisky, pour it into the plant. Make a toast and drink the empty glass. Repeat this procedure three times until Boos is pretty soused. Ask him for his keys and toast him again. Get the flask and go out the left door. Pick up the key, move the chock on the water wheel, go back into the mill and then head straight to town. Go to the gift shop and use the single key on the door. Grab the battery and steal the zorkmids and tickets from the cash register. Put the battery in your tele-orb.

New mill, moodock, memorial

Go back to the bridge and go right. Give the boy the tickets and fill the flask with river water. Return to the old mill and slip down the trap door. Use Boos' keys on the door and exit the new mill through the door on the right. Explore this new area and then from East Shanbar go to Moodock's building (the red one). Click on the *Survivor* game board and beat him. You'll receive a sword and a coin as a prize. Go to the blacksmiths (the stripey building). Give him the sword and leave. Cross the bridge into New West Shanbar to reach a fork marked by a memorial. Bear left until you reach The Fool's Memorial. Take the hook and head right until you reach Pugney's ranch.

Incinerator, whistle, blacksmith

Go to the red house and knock on the window. When he starts moaning, be apologetic and he'll let you take the box of bras. Go back to the shops of East Shanbar and go straight to the incinerator. Push lever one and throw the box of bras into the incinerator. Close the incinerator with the first lever and pull lever two. Examine the incinerator drawer to find the hot wire. Pour the flask of water over the wire and then pick it up. Go to the green building and use the wire as a picklock. Pick up the rats and place them in the box. Shake the cereal box twice and take the whistle. Go back to the blacksmiths and give him money for the repair work. Notice that the jewel is missing from the hilt. Show him the sword and then threaten him. He'll give you the true dwarven sword back. Show him the book you took from The Fool's Memorial. For two more zorkmids he'll read the book. He smudges the page and then gives you one zorkmid back. Pick up the book and leave.

Trailer, rebecca, silo

Now go back to The Fool's Memorial and go left at the fork. You should find yourself near a trailer and a silo. Go through the window and into the trailer. Slip through the first door on the left and click on the poodle. Now go into the door to the left of the open arch. Unfortunately, you'll get knocked out. Talk to Rebecca and pass the copy protection. Go into the kitchen, pick up the soap and drop it in the sink. Turn on the sink and wash the waif's gift in the sink. You now have one disc piece (of six). Open the fridge and take the frozen meat. Take the Thermos from the table. Go into the room on the right of the arch, examine the nightstand and take the mirror. Go outside, face the trailer and go right to the silo. Use the crank on the silo hatch and turn it clockwise. Pick up the carrots.

Milk, photos, love letter

Go back to Pugney's ranch and enter the big blue barn. Pick up some hay and drop it near his front hooves. Take the matches from your inventory and light one. Set the hay on fire and, with nothing in your hands, click on the fire to warm your hands. Take the Thermos and click it on the cow. Milk the cow

and then feed the carrots to the cow. Take a picture of the bovine and then go all the way back to the very first town. Go to the schoolhouse and show the book to Ms Peepers. Go to the Mayor's office and show it to him too (the meat from the trailer should be rotting by now). Go all the way back to the New West Shanbar bridge and go left to the dock. End the conversation with Ben and click on the knot in his hands. Learn the cow-hitch, click on Ben and ask him about photos. Click on the picture of Ms Peepers and he'll give you a love letter.

Witch, bog, tile puzzles

Give Ben some zorkmids to rent a boat. Take the rats out of the box and put them inside the motor. Go down the river to the Witch's hut and go inside. Drop the rotting meat on the ground and talk to her. Show her the book and then give her the love letter in exchange for the Witch's Stick. *Do not* touch the bat cage or the game will end. Pick up the stick and the meat, and leave via the opening in the hut. The map of the bog is random so you will have to map it out yourself. Use the stick on the patch of swamp you are about to step onto. If it sinks, don't go there. Make your way to the fork in the road (where the incinerator is on the left). Bear left until you reach the ancient ruins. Pick up the tiles and the frame. Select the tiles and use them with the frame. Drop the tiles into the frame. Examine the puzzle. Spell out the following (small letters): 'Water unseen at falls mix with bat droppings yields potion for (invisibility)' and (big letters): 'Search for three more pieces on the ground where this (was found)'.

Forest of spirits, archer, fairy

After solving said puzzle, you'll find two illuminite rocks and another piece of the disk (2 of 6) right where you're standing or behind you. Now you can see trees on the left. This is the Forest of Spirits. Go there. Go north, east, east and south to reach a tree with metal leaves. Hit the tree with the witch's stick to get more zorkmids (you'll need to do this several times to get tons of mullah). Turn around and go west, west, north, west, south and west. Give the Thermos to the Archer. Pick up the Thermos, the bow and the arrows. Go north, north and west. Quickly





light a match. Click on the fairy, be friendly and you'll receive some fairy dust. Go east, south, south, east, north, east, south, south and south to return to the ruins. If you run into Rebecca at any point just show her the book (you can usually find her right of the Hero's Memorial fork). After she's translated the book (and only after) make your way to Snoot's Farm.

Comedy club, vulture pits, cow photo

Go left at the farm to find yourself on a path with trees and water in the distance. Head towards the tree. Take the rope from the railings and tie it on the tree. Go down the rope twice. Important: before you go down you must have the living bonding plant in your inventory and have had the book translated by the blacksmith, Witch Itah, the Mayor and Rebecca. Enter Chuckle's Comedy Club. Once Cliff asks you to make him laugh, use the tape recorder to play back the jokes each of the four characters told you. On playing these, you win the contest and another piece of the disc (3 of 6). Exit quickly and go back up the rope. Stash the rope in your inventory, go back to Pugney's ranch and take a left to the vulture pits. Take the fairy dust and use it on the rotting meat. Select the meat from your inventory and then throw it. Quickly go forward into the pits, grab the talon and leave. Go back to the barn, milk the cow again and put the milk in the Thermos. Go back into town and head for Ben's boat (you must make sure you have a picture of the cow). Pay for another ride and return to the witch's hut. Ask her about photos and show her the snap of the cow. Take the bat cage and exit through the bog.

Whispering woods, reaper, canuk's shack

Now, from the incinerator, go right to the Whispering Woods. Make sure, at this stage, you have the Thermos with the milk, the bat cage, the sword and the coin Moodock gave you. Select the cage and release the bats. As soon as they fly off, pick up some bat 'guano' from the ground. Follow the bats when your vision starts to go wonky. If the message 'Can you see the Ga-lactic Milky Way?' sounds, take a drink of the milk. If you lose the bats, then the following moves will take you to the exit: south, east, east, south, east, south, east, south, east, north, north, north, east, east, south, south, south, west, south, south and you should be out. Go onto the Ferryman's dock and ring the bell three times. Show the coin to the Reaper - don't give it to him. He'll take you across the lake. Go up the hill to Canuk's shack. Go to the door and prise the door knocker off with your sword.

Bottle, vulture, lighthouse

Enter the shack and pick up the bottle and the scroll. Read the scroll to the duck to make Canuk appear. Ask Canuk about the bottle and he'll teleport you inside. Do the following quickly: go forward three times; get the rag; examine the safe next to the bed (combination = 9427); open the safe; get the disc piece (4 of 6) and the rusty metal

thing. Put the mirror in your hand and get out of the bottle. When Canuk starts to kill you, click the mirror on him and change him into a duck. Go back to the Ferryman's Isle and hit the bell twice. Give the reaper the coin. Go back through the woods, following the bat trail. Drink the milk if you have to. Clean the rusty metal thing with the rag. Head towards the vulture pits. Use the magnet (Canuk's door knocker) with the whistle and then blow the whistle. A vulture will pick you up. You can now go anywhere on the map just by clicking on it. Get some more hay from the barn and carrots from the silo, then head for the lighthouse. Go in and give the keeper one of your illuminite rocks. Show the keeper your disc pieces and he'll give you number five. Go upstairs, take the rope and tie a cow-hitch knot on the railing. Take the talon from your inventory and tie it to the rope. Then throw the rope.

Temple, troll cavern, pile of leaves

Go forward to the tree and forward again to the temple. Get the shield from the statue and enter the temple. End your conversation with the woman and give her your sword. She'll bless it. Exit the temple, turn 180 degrees and exit via the right-hand door. The dwarven leader will give you a helmet. Take it and skidaddle. Go back to the lighthouse and pick up the rope and talon. Use your map and go directly to the troll caverns (right of the hero fork). Pick up the illuminite rock from the inventory and use it on the helmet. Wear the helmet, pick up your now blue sword and enter the caverns. At the first guard, swing left and go forward. At the second guard, swing up and go forward. At the third guard, swing down and go forward. And at the head troll, keep threatening him. He'll give you the fear necklace. Go directly to the Forest of Spirits via the map. First, go to the leaves pit. From the entrance go north, north, west, south, west, north, north, west, west, north, north, north, east, east, east, east, south and east. At the leaves, use the talon and throw it at the pile. Take the knife and hit the trap with it. Then grab the talon.

Disc piece 6, dam, statues

Go through the new opening and north, north, north and north to reach a statue of a boar. Hit the statue three times with your sword to retrieve the final piece of the disc. Go back and west, north, west, west, west, west, south, west, west, north, west and west. You should now be at a spider. Show the fear necklace to the spider and it'll run away. Use the sword from your inventory and cut the web away. Go forward to the dam. Go forward once and fill the flask with the dam water. Take the bat guano from the inventory and drop it in the flask. Viola! An invisibility potion. Use the map to go directly to the Dwarven Mines (where you got the helmet) and enter the mine cart. In the mine, go left, right, forward, right, left, right, forward, right, left, left, right and forward. You should now be at the ancient ruins. From left to right, give the statues the following:

1. witch stick
2. talon
3. Thermos
4. box + helmet
5. shield
6. tele-orb

Put the disc pieces in the trencher and push the red button.

Wall of illusion, gates, orcs

You now have the flying disc of Frobozz. Pick up every single thing you see here and then use the map to go to the Cliffs of Depression. From there, do an about-face, and go left. You should be at the Wall of Illusion. Throw the disc at the wall and go forward into the Citadel of Zork. Take the bow from the inventory and click on the arrows. Shoot an arrow at the hand to open the gates. When you reach the Orc leader, drink the invisibility potion. When it says the orc guard can sense your presence, play the recording of Alexis the poodle. He'll run away. Go forward to the bridge.

Bridge, survivor, end...

At this point you must have all the following objects: shield, fear necklace, zorkmids, flask, helmet, knife, matches, bow, arrows, tele-orb, box, rope, fairy dust, Thermos, talon, witch stick, sword, illuminite, puzzle, carrots, hay, mirror, metal thing, rag, book, wire, Boos' key, gold key and the bonding plant. Throw all the objects at the bridge and into the fire. When you've thrown enough objects the bridge will be safe to cross (a message says so). Cross the bridge and play *Survivor With Morpheus*. To win, play the following moves and make sure you pass if Canuk is occupying the next space you need to go to:

B3, D4, C2, B4, D3, C1, A2, C3, D1, B2, C4, D2, B1, A3.
That's it! ☑

REMEMBER! REMEMBER!

£50

For complete spoils

Don't forget there's £50 pounds (smackeroones, credits, gold pieces etc.) waiting for the sender of the most complete spoil and the most cracked hack each month. Spoils must be as accurate and in depth as possible (we don't always have time to check them) while hacks should be in debug format if possible. Send to: SPOILED!, DAVID McCANDLESS, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER STREET, LONDON, W1P 1DE. Please allow 28 days for receipt of any prizes.



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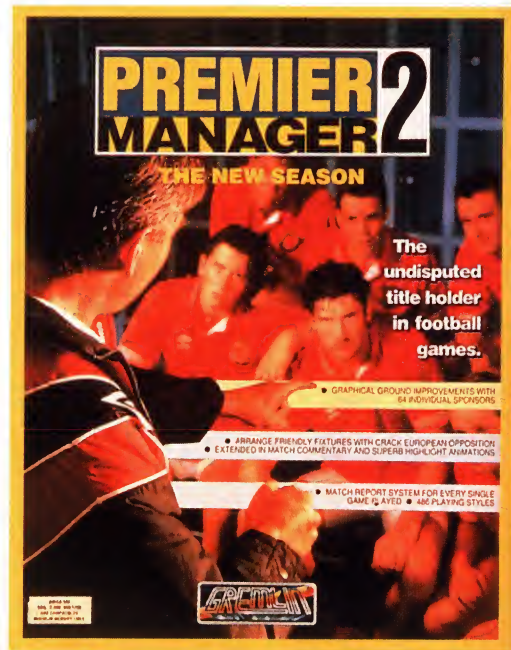
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The most write-on pages in the magazine offer you the chance to give the world the benefit of your wit and insight into the

world of PC games. Whether it's the price and quality of budget software, the level of sexism in the latest game or the merits of the shareware market, this is the place to write. Remember there's a free game for the Letter Of The Month.

Amiga Backlash

RE. MARK THOMPSON'S note about the Amiga's superior graphics routines (smirk). So then, Mark, when does *Links 386 Pro* SVGA come out on the Amiga eh?

Paul Antony, Cheltenham, Gloucs

Video Games Right Or Wrong

I AM WRITING to express my point of view on a couple of matters. Firstly, the attitude now that 'Computers destroyed my child's life'. This attitude has been going round since the Atari VCS in the early '80s. It recurred with the emergence of the ZX Spectrum and Commodore 64 (Remember them? Ah, the old days!), and is back now with the Nintendo/Sega boom. The PC and gamesplaying in general are also included here. To say that playing games is anti-social is crap. Kids swap games in the playground, go to each other's houses to play games etc. This is anti-social? Not having a Nintendo or some kind of computer makes a kid an outcast these days. Computers and gamesplaying increase hand-eye co-ordination, reflex, problem-solving (in lateral thinking games) and, most importantly, helps them become computer literate, which will be a necessity in the future.

Secondly, piracy rears its ugly head. In my youth I too copied games on my tape-to-tape. Disks stopped that. With an Amiga and a job I could more easily afford to buy games, so I stopped using pirated games. I could more easily read a magazine, pick a good game and play the guts out of it, by which stage I could afford a new one. Now with CD-ROM on the rise, piracy looks about to be a thing of the past. I won't be getting one for a while yet, but by the time I do, will the price of games drop? Granted, it takes a lot to fill a CD and develop a game on it, but a lot less to mass produce. To charge over £70.00 for *The 7th Guest*, just because it was the first CD-ROM only game, is a form of reverse

piracy. People buying it are being ripped off. I hope software houses take note of this. They say half the people playing their games are using pirated copies. Will they then halve the price for CD-ROM versions? I doubt it.

Finally, I really enjoy the mag. The reviews (and humour in them) are excellent. At least you give a game a thorough review - a quality which is sadly lacking in most magazines, except when they review a big release.

John Lawless, Cabra, Dublin

Shareware Sexism

I HAVE READ last month's *Off The Boards* article regarding PD and Shareware titles. I was totally appalled having read about a new Shareware release, titled *Get That Girl*, the object of the game being to induce a girl to have sex with you. Strike me if I am wrong, but don't you think that's a little desperate?

I think it's a sad state when the computer industry goes as far as exploiting digitised pictures of naked women to capture a large percentage of the games consumer market. When software industries start degrading women by using them as sexual objects for men's pleasure, it makes me wonder what games we can expect to see in the unfolding years to come.

People who purchase these sort of games should get out more and socialise with the opposite sex, instead of getting a thrill out of computer-digitised images of some bimbo with the brain the size of a peanut. I can just see it now, someone cutting and pasting those smutty images and using them as wallpaper for Windows.

I think your magazine is remarkably outstanding and beats many others, however, I have to agree with Mr Illegible from York, it would be worthwhile having a classified section and a back page stating what's coming up next month.

Jonathan Clough, Selby, North Yorkshire

I agree with your comments but, sadly, I think things are going to get a lot worse, despite some notional attempts at censorship/certification. Ed.

Death To Shareware

IN THE ONGOING struggle for more quality in your already wonderful mag, I would like to suggest something that other people may not agree with. Kill Shareware on disk! While I am sure that someone out there is interested in a cute little game about blowing away galactic space invaders in four flippin' colours, I, for one, am not.

Paul Wicks, Wokingham, Berkshire

Quick-fire Questions

I HAVE A NUMBER of questions which I have wanted to ask for quite a while, so here goes:

1. Could you recommend a Notation programme which allows you to play your keyboard, shows the notes on the screen, allows you to write music on the PC and play through the instrument (which has midi ports?) and is an HP

DiskJet s10 Postscript compatible?

2. How do I free up EMS memory for X-Wing? I need it to play speech through a Sound Blaster card.
3. How much would it cost to upgrade my 486SX 25 to a fully fledged DX2 66? I own an Elonex.
4. How much would it cost to buy an adapter that would enable me to play Amiga games on my PC?
5. Apart from Microsoft Flight Sim 5 what is the best 'serious' flight sim like Airport '93 and Airlines?
6. Is Sound Blaster Pro 8 or 16-bit?

Ian Rendall, Yeovil, Somerset

1. Cakewalk for Windows 2.0
2. You should have the line EMM386.exe 2948 RAM in your CONFIG.SYS.
3. It depends whether your motherboard will take a 66MHz crystal. If not you'll still be able to upgrade to a DX2 50. The cost will depend on how much you're willing to shop around check ads in magazines like Computer Shopper (He plugged outrageously).
4. There isn't one. You couldn't emulate the graphics hardware.
5. Sub Logic is a company which does a range of high-quality sims and there's also a very good shareware game called Light Aircraft Simulator.
6. 16-bit. Ed.

Chips With Everything

I'VE NOTICED with interest recently the introduction of special hardware chips for use on the latest consoles i.e. the SNES 'SEX' and the Mega Drive 'DSP', which give what is otherwise a fairly slow machine the ability for fast 3D graphics.

Could this technology be adapted for use on the PC with, say, some sort of expansion board that could handle hardware bitmapping and gourad shading. Maybe it could use a dedicated 3D graphics chip which would reduce the workload on what is becoming an overworked CPU.

It seems many software houses are now increasingly using the above techniques, but many PCs are finding it hard to keep up with the new technology. Perhaps this kind of board would help to alleviate this problem and allow for even better games.

Phil Chapman, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk

Budgets No Bargains

AS A PC OWNER of many years, I remember when the classic games of the day (*Rise Of The Dragon*, *Sim Earth*, *Kings Quest*, *Elvira* etc.) were sold at £30.00 to £40.00 a throw and the situation is much the same today. Budget games were available at £10.00 each but were perfect for giving your machine a terminal illness.

Unfortunately, then and now, I am on a low income and I guessed that if I waited long enough, the 'Five Star' rated games of yester-year would also eventually become budget buys.

However, three things have happened.

1. Budget buys have continued with the vast majority being sad conversions from other game formats that serve admirably as beer mats. Many were not full-price games from the start and are

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Space Quest

Fellow Space Hulksters, after having just got my ass well and truly whupped yet again trying to sort out *Web Of Flames*, I thought I'd drop you a line or two.

I love flight sims. You know, 'Bogey on your six, Red Leader' (ugh!) etc. Well, the bottom line is that I have a paralysed right arm and as such find it difficult to look at the screen, look at F1 on the keyboard, activate ECM, kick in the afterburners and smoke a cigarette all at the same time.

Question: Anybody out there in the same boat (as it were)? You lot got any ideas to make things simpler for the disabled quarter? Any reasonable suggestions will be gratefully received (preferably ones that don't need a bankloan).

Anyway, time to wield powersword again and waste a few more genestealers. Hang loose and may the great god of gamers provide infinite lives for the chosen few i.e. me.

Mark Beech, Northwich, Cheshire

Thrustmaster and Flight Sim Pro joysticks both have additional buttons on the stick which should make things a bit easier. Thrustmaster also has a rudder pedal and a Weapons Control System which, while separate from the joystick, are easier than using the keyboard. However, be warned, none of this comes cheap. Ed.

sold with labels claiming '90%+' rating. They are rated from being played on the Amiga which counts for little on the PC.

2. Compilations have emerged in which there may be one decent game and two or three dogs. The result: again you're paying £40.00 for a single decent game in a big box filled with other disks whose uses amount to little more than formatting and backing-up data. I agree that some compilations are good, but a choice of purchase is required, not a publisher's whim of 'what might be a good pack'.

3. CD-ROM Drives. I'm sure you'll appreciate that such machinery is out of my price range, but it appears that good compilations, i.e. Origin's, are moved to this format and not to disk. Ultimately, these programs are limited to the lucky ones. A CD-ROMS format marketing strategy by some companies I think. I'm sure the companies concerned will say, 'The advantage of CD is that you can pack a lot of data/games on a single CD which saves disks, costs less to produce, blah... blah... blah...'

But - and this is a big but - if most computer users do not have a CD-ROM drive, who the hell are you selling them to? Do a survey. I know that CD-ROM users are in the minority. If you must sell on CD-ROM, sell on floppies as well, just see which format sells fastest.

I thought that by patiently waiting, I could beat the system. Ultimately, I have lost as I now realise that I can never get the games I want at a reasonable price. I still have to make do with demo disks and shareware.

I have a message for companies like Sierra, EA/Origin, LucasArts, SSI and the rest. Sell your classic oldies as single programs, at a budget price, on floppies. I know that, at least in the UK, you'll make many friends and one user extremely happy.

T.R. Vassell, Walthamstow, London

I think you're being more than a little unfair on the Budget market, certainly in the last few months. The prices have crept up but you can't argue with the quality of games like LHX, Chuck Yeager, Links, Ultima VI, et al. The same is true of compilations. The CD market is taking off in terms of product and user base and it's going to become increasingly dominant next year. However, hopefully this will result in a fall in price of both hardware and software making it far more accessible. Ed.

Windows Of Opportunity

I AM JUST writing to you (again!) with a tip for all those non-multi-spin CD-drive owners out there. A friend of mine was good enough to lend me his copy of *The Seventh Guest* and, as expected, it was totally unplayable: broken speech to the point where it was unintelligible and slow-slow movement. Then one day I was working in Windows and instead of resetting the machine as instructed by Trilobite I launched straight into *The Seventh Guest*: like wow, man! Normal speech, fast fluid movement, all in glorious SVGA, a first for Windows, actually speeding an application up. I have since played the entire game, first doing something for a few minutes in Windows (writing a letter or something) then exiting and loading the game up. I have no idea why my CD-ROM should

react like this, but it's made me reconsider bothering with a new drive, for a while anyway. Now for the Caveat-Emptor: once in a while, when the speech gets particularly demanding, the game crashes you back to DOS, but not before the spoken part finishes and it saves the game at that point as SAVE.Z which just needs to be renamed as SAVE.9 or something, then just return to the game and load from that saved position. That actually only happened to me four times in the entire game.

Now perhaps you could help me; the kitchen puzzle, where the can spells out a sentence, do you know what it is? I can't seem to crack that one.

T.F. Paulazzo, Beddington, Surrey

At the risk of treading on the TruePlayers' toes, you could try Shy gypsy slyly spryly tryst by my crypt. Ed.

Muso News

I'M WELL IMPRESSED with PC Zone so far. A good mixture of reviews and humour makes me eager for each month's issue (crawl, crawl, creep). But what I'd really like to see in the future is some inside info on the people who create these games of ours. As a musician myself I'd be interested in folks like Robert Prince, composer at Apogee and then there's others like designer Mark Coleman of the Bitmap Brothers. There must be a ton of programmers, artists etc. whose names we've missed, that deserve a little more credit for keeping us entertained.

I've noticed, when reading PC Zone that you often use *Fate Of Atlantis* as a yardstick for other adventure games but that you never mention Access Software's *Amazon*. I don't want to put down LucasArts, as I think all their games are wonderful, but I must say, I found *Amazon* just as good. What is your problem? Was it too easy for you? Or is it that you just don't rate it?

Lastly, I have one of these so-called 'ninja' PCs

and have not found any commercial game that would not run, yet three of the *Zone*'s cover disks haven't loaded! Has anyone else had problems or am I unlucky?

Dave Charsley, King's Heath, Birmingham

We certainly intend to increase our coverage of the personalities behind the top games and that includes composers and artists (provided it doesn't mean us having to listen to any more ruddy soundtrack CDs!)

No-one here would put Amazon on anything like the same plain as Fate Of Atlantis or Monkey Island. As for your cover disks, you seem to have been horribly unlucky. For each disk consult the Cover Disk page in the relevant issue of PC Zone and ring the helpline listed. They should be able to sort out your problem or replace your disk. Ed.

The Final Frontier

AFTER READING the article in the December issue of your totally brilliant mag (says he, in the hope of winning something), in *Bits & PCs* about being able to run 386 games on a 286 and the review of *Frontier: Elite 2*, I would like to know if it is essential to have a 386 to run *Elite 2*. Also, is it possible to run it with 1Mb of RAM because we're back in the dark ages and only own a 286 running at 12MHz with 1Mb RAM installed.

M. Payne (Mr), Farnham, Surrey

I'm afraid that Elite II does need a 386 processor at 25MHz to run. Time to build up those credits and get an upgrade. Ed.

Turning Japanese

HAVING READ your article on 'Edutainment' games (issue eight) I noticed a piece of software by Bayware Inc. called *Power Japanese For Windows*. As the contact list for the publisher is not listed, I would be indebted to you if you would supply me with this information.

Toby Reynolds, Mells, Somerset

Power Japanese can be obtained from, among others, Roundhill Computer Systems tel: 0672 841 535. Ed.

Platform For Reply

BEFORE BUYING MY PC, I decided to buy a copy of your magazine. It was a really good read (oh, by the way, could you put a decent virus-checker on the cover disk?) until I got to the Wordprocessor pages.

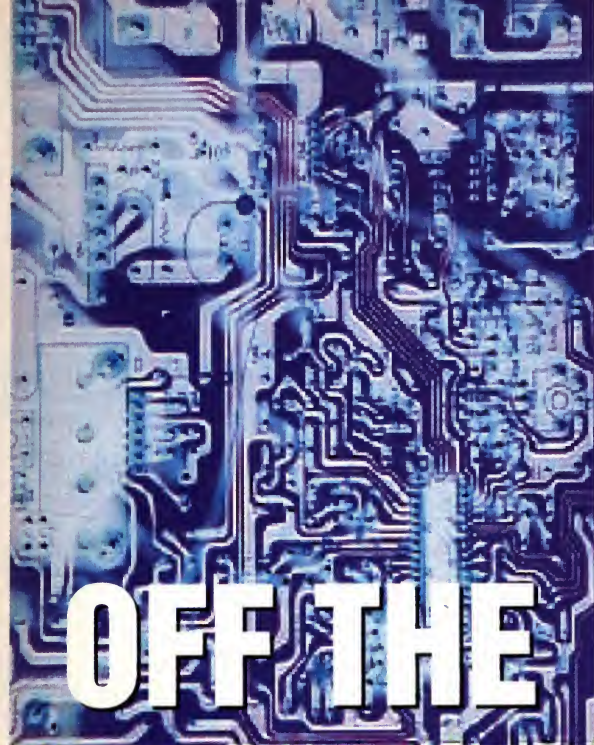
Once there I found a totally offensive letter from Richard Allen. He implied that games like *Zool* and *Prehistorik 2* were for kids who couldn't read.

It's all very well having excellent graphic adventures and flight sims, but when you've only got half an hour to play, pressing ten million buttons to take off or engaging in conversation with someone of monosyllabic tendencies isn't the ideal type of game to play.

I much prefer a game you can get straight into without reading too vast a manual. Long live *Zool*.

Peter Row, Leamington, Warwick

PC Zone reserves the right to alter, edit and generally hack about with your letters until they bear little relation to the original. All the other usual bottom-covering disclaimers apply.



OFF THE BOARDS

Going huntin' shootin' and fishin' with **PC Zone's** own Jack Hargreaves, **Mark Burgess**. Plus evolving life, crashing planes and playing pinball.

WHAT IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE?

PUBLIC DOMAIN This is software that's free. You can copy and distribute it as you like. The only conditions are that you do not pass the work off as your own, do not incorporate it within another program without due credit and, of course, that you do not charge money for something you have got for nothing.

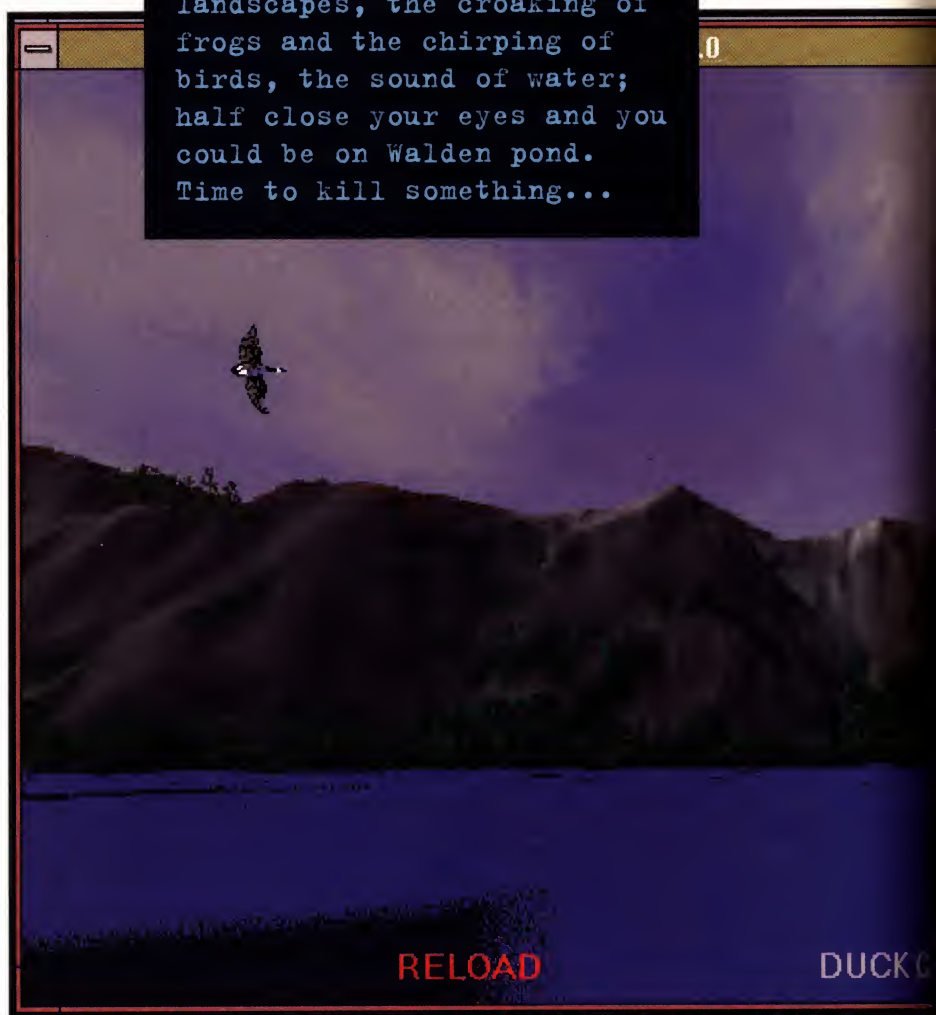
SHAREWARE This is software that asks for a registration fee, either after a specific time or 'if found useful'. The fee varies but you are morally obliged to pay it or stop using the program. Indeed many shareware programs ask you to send \$5.00 to an address in Wichita. Registration should bring the latest or full version of the program, a place on the mailing list for any updates and a properly printed manual. Not to mention a marvellous glow of moral satisfaction.

BANNERWARE/ADWARE This is a program where the author does not ask for any payment but reserves copyright. This means that you have a free licence to use and copy the game.

DEMONSTRATIONS Many commercial software houses will release a playable demo of their latest games so that you have some idea of what you're expected to pay around £50.00 for. Not often found in libraries, they tend to live on the covers of magazines or on bulletin boards.

WHAT DO YOU GET? The disk should contain a file called READ.ME or README.1ST. Read it by typing TYPE README.1ST | MORE. There will also be some sort of batch (.BAT) file. Typing in the name of it should load the program. Most programs will come in archived form. This is because the library is trying to fit as much information as possible on a 760K disk. The files will have extensions like .ARC, .ARJ, .LHA, .PAK, .ZIP or .ZOO but the disk will come with a program that will decompress the files, together with instructions on how to use it.

We'll start off with two Windows games about the great outdoors. Tranquil landscapes, the croaking of frogs and the chirping of birds, the sound of water; half close your eyes and you could be on Walden pond. Time to kill something...



DuckHunt

WRITTEN BY Andrew Novotak in Visual Basic with superb fractal-generated landscapes and riveting action. Your aim is to shoot ducks. That's it, really.

From the main screen you can select all the options available by right-clicking on the screen. First, select one of the three skill levels and the number and speed of the ducks.

Once back at the main screen click on DUCK CALL. You'll hear your duck call, and in will come the ducks. Then all you have to do is aim the cursor at the ducks as they fly across your screen and remember to reload your shotgun. The shotgun can hold three cartridges at a time. You can reload your gun as often as you like. There are 20 ducks in each wave and you must kill a certain number to get to the next one.

The game is fairly slow, but the fractal-generated landscapes are beautiful. There isn't any blood; the ducks just fall in the water (you don't get a retriever). Okay to pass the time while Windows beavers away in the background.

Shareware by: Andrew Novotak

Registration: \$15.00. Brings a *DuckHunt* Player's Guide, a copy of the game with your name on it and any updates or new landscapes to hunt in.

Needs: Windows and *vbrun200.dll* (available on Bulletin Boards and compuserve). Technical requirements are the same as for *WinFish* (above right).



WinFish

THIS IS A FISHING simulator also written in Visual Basic, and so needs *vbrun200.dll*. You begin by selecting a rod, then tackle and, finally, bait. Once your tackle is set, it's time to go fishing. Select an area in the main viewing window that contains water (this is important: fish don't live in trees), and as you click on the water, the angler will cast his line. When you hear the splash, look at the Fish Finder and listen for the beep indicating you have found a spot containing fish: when the finder sounds, they will show up on the display. There are three grey lines which are depth indicators. Set your line depth (by clicking on the line-depth buttons) to where the fish are. Once you have the location and line depth sorted, wait for a strike on the line.

The strike indicator at the bottom of the screen will change colour depending on how often the fish are biting at your bait, going from yellow to orange to red (yellow is a nibble, orange is a bite and red is a definite strike). When the light comes on, click on the set hook button. This jams the sharp hook in the fish's mouth. If you are too slow you will miss the fish and have to try again. Once you have caught a fish you'll need to reel him in.

If you reel too slowly the fish will eat the bait and shake off the hook; too fast and you will pull the hook out of the fish's mouth (Yuk!).

Once you have landed a fish you need to decide what to do with it. If it's within the legal limits and looks good enough to eat, put it in the ice chest. (I clicked on this first, thinking it held beer.)

The game – or simulation if you prefer – is fairly slow. But then so is the real thing (geddit?).

Shareware by: Andrew Novotak and Ian Firth.

Registration: \$19.00. Brings a *WinFish* Player's Guide and a sticker you can put on your car (Smart!). You also get a copy of the game with your name on it and a place on the list to receive the next two scenarios: Fly-Fishing In Yosemite and Deep Sea Fishing Off Key West. Oh boy.

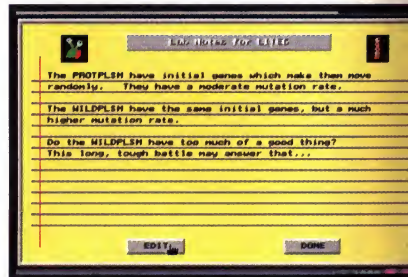
Needs: Windows 3.1, 3Mb RAM (4Mb recommended), 16-colour VGA (256 colour recommended).



(Left) Shoot defenceless ducks.
(Below) Beautiful scenery but adrenalin addicts might prefer train-spotting.



Another rivetting screenshot from a Life game.



Evolve! Lite

HERE YOU CONTROL a small world where animals hunt, eat, mate and mutate. You can alter the environment and the genetic makeup of the animals. The animals are omnivorous and have nine 'action genes' which determine which way they move when in the presence of friend or foe; a 'spawn threshold' which is the amount of energy an animal saves before it reproduces; and the 'metabolism gene' which determines how fast it moves and consumes energy. All these genes are subject to mutation at a rate you are able to alter.

Once you have created an animal, you can turn it loose and watch it prosper or die. The action takes place on a screen reminiscent of various *Life* games.

The unregistered version comes with 11 species, but you can create an unlimited number.

Shareware by: M. Wall and M. Bace

Registration: \$19.95. Brings 12 species competing at once; trend and cycle graphs; seasons and populations of up to 1,000 plants and 4,000 animals.

Needs: 386/486 PC with VGA graphics and dos 3.3 or higher, mouse, 1Mb RAM. It supports Sound Blaster and compatibles.





Save your 50p with shareware pinball.

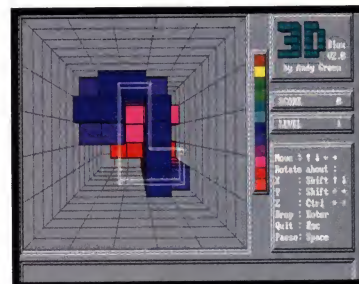
Epic Pinball

THIS GAME is easily as good as commercial offerings – as good as *Pinball Dreams* and certainly better than *Pinball For Windows*. It leaves shareware rivals like *Protec* standing. The unregistered version has one table: Android. Additional tables are Pot Of Gold, Excalibur, Crash And Burn, Magic, Jungle Pinball (with Jill), Deep Sea and Enigma.

Controls are right and left shift for the flippers, nudge, nudge left and right and the ability to alter the smoothness of the table.

Shareware from: Epic Megagames (0767 260 903).

Registration: £23.99 for each set of four additional tables (£34.99 for all eight). **Needs:** a 386 or better with VGA. Supports Sound Blaster and compatibles and Gravis Ultrasound.

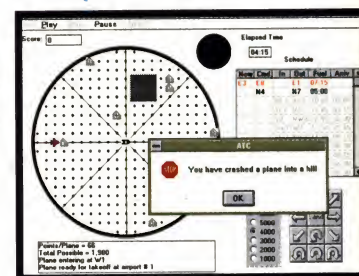


Drop bricks down an elevator shaft in Blox.

Blox

THIS IS ANOTHER 3D version of Tetris but much clearer than most. The blocks can be rotated and shifted with easy keyboard controls. There is a pause feature but no look-ahead.

Shareware by: Andrew Green (donation requested).



ATC: you'll never fly again.

ATC

AN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL simulator for Windows and again in Visual Basic.

You can alter the number of planes, their timing, the amount and height of hills and the size of restricted areas. This allows you to get used to the game in easy mode. On the default settings you quickly get to the stage where the screen fills up and planes are piling into each other and into hills. To direct them, click on the plane and then the altitude and the compass direction. The radar screen is clear, as are the 'flight strips' which serve to remind you of the instructions you have given. The controls are simple and are mouse-based.

If you liked the old DOS shareware ATC sims, you'll love this.

Shareware by: Ted Gillam

Registration: \$10.00

Needs: vbrun300.dll.



Skunny Hardnut

THIS IS SHAREWARE'S answer to Sonic; a squirrel which features in four games from Copysoft. They are fairly similar, so I'll spare you all the gory details. Briefly, you play Skunny or his supermodel girlfriend, Rosie.

In *Back To The Forest* you must battle with King Toad and free your chums, the grey squirrels. To do this you need to find the super health nut that lets you fly through the air and knock the toads off their kennels.

Save Our Pizzas has the chef of Cadiz brainwashing all Italian pizza chefs so that they forget the recipe for pizza. You must go back to Rome in 50BC and find the original. Unfortunately, the evil chef has followed you back and told the emperor, Bigus Titus (and I swear I'm not making this up) that Skunny is a spy. So you have to fight everyone. The other adventures – if I can use the term – are *Lost In Space* and *Desert Raid*.

They are all much the same: VGA platform games with only a couple of levels in the unregistered version. The problem with them, and a lot of stuff from Copysoft, is that although the programs are technically good they lack gameplay. The parallax scrolling is smooth and fast but the games are boring and veer from too easy to too hard on the same level. If you like console-type platform games, these are worth a look.

Shareware from: Copysoft

Registration: £24.95

Needs: Will run on any PC with 640K conventional memory, VGA and DOS 3 or above.



If you can believe a squirrel super-hero in ancient Rome...



...You'll believe a squirrel can fly.



++FROM OUR OWN
CORRESPONDENT++



Like all New Year specials, this month's column has been pre-recorded. Now over to a live

satellite link with Lisbon, Portugal:

THE BEST OF 1993

Bom dia. It has been a strange year for shareware. In January, *Wolfenstein* was still top. It was challenged by some excellent shoot 'em-ups like *Galaxians* and *Overkill*. Then came *Major Striker*, a fine scrolling game in the *Zaxxon* tradition.

A sort of successor to *Wolfenstein* was *Catacomb Abyss*, where you wandered around mazes collecting objects and killing things. There were puzzles of an elementary sort; the order in which you collected the keys mattered and there were hidden areas.

Ancients was an attempt at a first person arcade RPG but suffered from repetitive graphics and (for me) mind-numbing tedium. The shareware demo of *Spear Of Destiny* promised more than the final game delivered. Good demos were few and far between. The ones on magazine covers were generally tailored 'exclusives' and not on the Bulletin Boards.

Apogee continued to do what it's best at – producing arcade puzzle games. *Monster Bash* was their finest followed by *Bio Menace*. Apogee's year closed on *Halloween Harry*, its first VGA platform game. If *Halloween Harry* sets the trend with its graphics I hope that its other feature of only five levels in the unregistered version doesn't.

A good VGA game appeared from Germany, *Electro Body* – now taken over by Epic and retitled *Electro Man* – was an exciting adventure marred by lack of scrolling. Germany also produced the pinball simulator, *Protec*. From Kuwait came a version of *Tetris* called *Kuwaitris*, which came with an impassioned plea on behalf of POWs (but not Filipina maids).

Other developments included a surge of good games for Windows. These have normally been small-screen clones of arcade games, but *Dare To Dream* from Epic was a fully-featured graphic adventure.

Programmers to watch included Takeshi Inoue (*Missile Command*) and Sarwan Narine (*Defender* and *Space Intruders*); perhaps one of these will cover *Scramble*, *Tempest* or *Zaxxon*. *Tempest* received a good version in *MS Arcade for Windows* – a commercial program for £18.00 – and a bad freeware version called *Hurricane*.

The registration fees of shareware are now close to the price of commercial software. *Fractemo* is a whopping \$50.00 registration for an indifferent fractal program. For the same money you could buy *Tornado*.

What about the future? More professional-looking programs and more expensive ones. The erosion of the difference between shareware and mainstream, and the disappearance of Public Domain entirely (I think a few utilities and *Fractint* are all that's left). There will be calls to tidy up the shareware industry – as there are every year – but attempts to tie up American outlets in exclusive agreements will fail. The American shareware industry is far more robust and professional. Its publishers are organisations with massive turnovers and the resources to develop games as good as any. While British shareware publishers take the short term view, buying in rather than fostering talent, they will remain glorified importers.

++NEWSFLASH++

Sheffield Shareware & PD Library have recently announced that they are pulling out of the shareware business.



Mr Cursor

HE'S SCARED OF ELITE II



I'M PETRIFIED OF MY PC, wary of Windows, dubious where DOS is concerned, fearful of the fact that I've got two joystick ports which aren't apparently compatible with one another, and I'm afraid of buying a CD drive – mainly because it'll be one more thing I don't understand which will inevitably go bigtime wrong when I'm least expecting it. But all these worries are nothing when compared to *Elite II*. Your question, I assume, will be why? What's so scary about *Elite II*? And the answer comes four-fold. Let's take the points one by one.

Firstly, we have the fact that *Elite II* comes on a single disk. Okay, so it's a high density disk, but at the end of the day there's still just the one, containing uncompressed data which takes a mere seven point three pico-seconds to install onto the hard drive. And, heavens above, you can even play the bloody game directly from the A drive if you want. This is way over the top. Call me 'new fashioned' if you like, but I expect more for my 40 quid. I've got space for 200 megs on my hard drive and I want the thing filled to capacity. *Return To Zork* was quite user-friendly in this respect. So was *Privateer*. And *Strike Commander* did the best work of all – I even had to delete some stuff before I could fit that one in. So why can't *Elite II*, containing its 100,000,000,000 star systems, do any better? On to problem (or fear) number two.

Okay, I admit that again it's down to me being 'new fashioned' I'm

afraid, but please, just bear with me. I'm talking about *Elite II*'s save game and 'name your character' routines, which are, essentially, the same. They're joined at the hip, the chest, the waist and the head. Most PC games – realising they have a hard disk at their disposal – say to you at the beginning of a session something like: 'So what do you want to be called this time?' and then remember your name and use it later on. And we all have our own private jokes, don't we? In flight sims I tend to log on as Stumpy Bader, while in space games I tend to favour Lord Admiral Allen Se Of The Planet Fiend (it's a long story). However, *Elite II* only acknowledges you by the name of your last saved game position – and you only have eight character spaces at your disposal for these. The upshot of this is most annoying.

For instance, I spent about three days zapping around the universe while continually saving and reloading from different positions, renaming them as I went so I'd know what was what. When I finally got shot to buggery and killed, I was treated to the *Elite II* spinning gravestone sequence and it said 'Rest In Peace Commander Tempsave'. I've also died as Commander Drugrun, Commander Vvv, Commander GoToSol, Commander Doofer, Commander Pluto and Commander GotBgLas (which meant I'd got the 100 megawatt beam laser). (You obviously weren't very good at using it, though. Ed.) So that's whinge two over, the save routines.

Whinge three has got me really terrified. It's the *Elite II* copy protection system. It's the old trusty 'manual-based' method where you type in the first letter of word x on line y on page z. Fair enough, and nothing wrong with that, I thought to begin with. But does it happen just the once? At the beginning of the game, each time you boot it up? No, it continues throughout a game no matter how long you're at it... and you're not even told if you got the 'answers' right. The idea is that if you answer incorrectly often enough, you're kicked out of the game. This has happened to me several times, even though I bought my copy of *Frontier* in a proper shop and therefore own a totally kosher manual. Maybe the mistakes were all my fault and down to lack of concentration. Or maybe it's that the in-game look-up table doesn't always tie in with the finished booklet. Whatever... there's no way of knowing. What I do know, however, is that if I'd wanted to pirate *Elite II* I could have photocopied the manual with the greatest of ease. So, the genuine owners of *Elite II* are beaten with the same stick used to beat the hackers and, as a result, nobody wins. In fact it's more precise than that, because everybody loses due to the prolonged viciousness of the attack. Has David Braben ever heard of the Code Wheel? With, for instance, dark grey letters and numbers on a black background and a one entry per game input, the system would be both more palatable and more effective. Okay, so it's still not totally pirate-proof – but it cacks all over the protection system Professor 'Clever Trevor' Braben has used from an altitude of about five zillion miles (due to the fact that it's extremely hard to photocopy and that the pieces then need to be cut out and pinned together).

Right, so now we're on to reasons to be scared number four. And with *Elite II* it's the music, which is frightening in that it's so completely useless. The 'let's use classical soundtracks' idea is fine, sure, just like in *2001 A Space Odyssey*. Real orchestral classical soundtracks don't date, after all, because they're sort of beyond the fickle winds of fashion. However, these same classical soundtracks, when recreated using a cheesy Bontempi organ sound with nightmarish warbly 'trill' effects added to the ends of sustained notes, do date. They date horribly in fact. You can't help but think of 'Classics On 45' or Rolf Harris and his Stylophone. Oh well.

Pheh. That really was a mega moan session, wasn't it? Still, it's off my chest now... and contrary to what you may be thinking, I do still love *Elite II*: all the music (apart from Strauss's *The Docking Waltz*) has been disabled, and I've come to terms with my new name of Commander Tempsave (and have even started using it in other games, for goodness sake). So it's sort of a happy ending. There's just room before I go for a quick *Elite II*-related true story, though. Sitting comfortably? Then here goes... I was round at a friend's place a couple of weeks ago and he'd just bought a copy of the game himself. His girlfriend, already a bit of a computer widow, was watching him intently as he opened the box. The amusing thing was the different emotions they displayed as the giant starmap was unfolded and placed on the carpet. Steve was grinning like a Cheshire cat, and pointing at all the stars: 'Look, billions of them,' he said. 'And they've all got planets and moons and satellites to land on.' Jane simply looked up at the ceiling in despair and said, 'Oh no!!!!' ☹



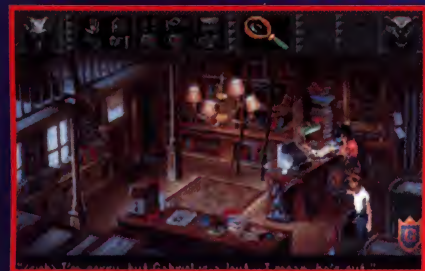
Why Commander Tempsave? Is this Mr Cursor's real name? Did he have cruel parents? Or is he just extremely sad? Read on and all will be revealed...



A tribute to the hot new
NEO - GOTHIC genre!



Designed with the look
and feel of today's
hottest graphic novels!



A nightmare comes to
life in modern-day
NEW ORLEANS



Written by JANE JENSEN
Co-Author of
KING'S QUEST VI



3-D
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